AMAZING HEROES PREVIEW SPECIAL

No. 133
Jan 15, 1988
$5.50
$8.00 Can

1988 EDITION

0 74470 74113 8 03

AMAZING HEROES PREVIEW SPECIAL

Editor
KIM THOMPSON
Assistant Editor
Kevin Dooley
Researchers
Philip Bentley (Australia specialist)
Paul Carbonaro
J. Collier
Arthur Byron Cover
Dwight R. Decker (Disney specialist)
Brad Elliott
Michael Eury
R. Flore (Moorcock specialist)
Cedilla Grave
Janet Hetherington (Canada specialist #1
Gil Jordan
Heidi MacDonald
Andy Mangels (DC/Dark Horse specialist)
Donald Markstein (Archie specialist)
Edward O'Neil
Fred Patten (Japanimation specialist)
David Peattie
Frank Plowright (U.K. specialist)
Thom Powers (Harvey Pekar specialist)
Ed Sample
Robert J. Sadara
Edd Vick (Small Press specialist)
Sheldon Wiebe (Canada specialist #2)
John Wilcox

Art Director
DOUG ERB
Production
Mark Thompson
Coco Shinomiya
Audu Paden
Typesetting
Arlene Easter
Inez M. Gorell
Mario Hernandez
Mark Thompson
Cover by
Paul Chadwick
Michael T. Gilbert
Colored by
Paul Chadwick
Doug Erb
Separations
Mark Thompson
Special thanks
Jennifer McAdams
Circulation
Rachel Enger
Printed at
Port Publications
Wisconsin

DISTRIBUTORS: ANDROMEDA PUBLICATIONS LTD., 387 Queen Street West, Toronto, Ontario, M5V 2A4, Canada. (416) 593-8894. BUD PLANT, INC., PO Box 1886, Grass Valley, CA 95945, U.S.A. (916) 273-9588. CAPITAL CITY DISTRIBUTORS, 2827 Perry St., Madison, WI 53713, U.S.A. (608) 274-8987. CAVCO, INC., 114 "A" Bldg., 1401 Fairfax Trafficway, Kansas City, KS 66115, U.S.A. (913) 281-5240. DIAMOND DISTRIBUTORS, 1720 Belmont Ave., Baltimore, MD 21207, U.S.A. (301) 298-1184. FANTAGRAPHICS BOOKS, INC., 1800 Bridgegate Street, Suite 101, Westlake Village, CA 91361, U.S.A. (805) 379-1881. MULTI-BOOK & PERIODICAL, 4136 S. Service Road, Burlington, Ontario, Canada, L7L 4X5 (416) 632-5573. STYX COMICS SERVICE, 1958 Arlington Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba R2X 1W6, Canada. (204) 586-8547. SUNRISE COMICS, 5313 Sheila, Commerce, CA 90040, U.S.A. (213) 263-5440. SUPERHERO ENTERPRISES, 70 Morris St., Morristown, NJ 07960, U.S.A. (201) 455-1211. TITAN DISTRIBUTORS, Ltd., PO Box 250, London E3 4HT, England. (01) 838-6167

AMAZING HEROES #133 (ISSN 0745-6506), January 15, 1988. Published twice monthly by Fantagraphics Books, Inc. Editorial and business offices: 1800 Bridgegate Street, Suite 101, Westlake Village, CA 91361. Office of publication: 25 Juniper Road, PO Box 787, Bethel CT 06801. Entire contents copyright © 1987 Fantagraphics Books, Inc. All rights reserved. No material herein may be copied or reproduced in any manner whatsoever (excluding brief excerpts used for review purposes) without written consent of the publisher. Second-class postage paid at Bethel CT and additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Please send Form 3579 to **AMAZING HEROES**, 1800 Bridgegate Street #101, Westlake Village, CA 91361.
One-year subscription in U.S.: $52.80, outside U.S.A.: $70.00 in U.S. funds, please.

COMIC BOOKS

A

ABUNDI!

Created by VANESSA HOWLE; written by VANESSA HOWLE and TOM SNEOGOSKI; illustrated by GARY THOMAS WASHINGTON

48 black-and-white pages, $2.95; initially to be a special but soon to be a regular series from WEEBEE COMICS

The contents of this version of ***Abundi!*** (now being published by the recently-formed WeeBee rather than Victory) differ radically from the contents of the previous version, mainly because the Japanese animation firm who owned the rights to the artwork, the previous artist was copying felt that he was leaning on the ancient custom of swiping a little too heavily. Vanessa Howle explained that when she received the submission "the artwork was so dynamic I couldn't get over it." She later learned, however, that the artist in question was tracing actual poses from animation books. Now the book will be illustrated by Gary (***A Boy and His 'Bot***) Washington, with back-up stories drawn by Eugene Ishikawa, a Japanese artist whose work is of extremely high quality—and not traced from anywhere.

Abundi! follows the adventures of Nan and Rhea, a Japanese and American, respectively, who work as troubleshooters for the World Protection League. You might say this series takes place 20 minutes in the future, during an unspecified period while the present is making the transition to the future. "When characters get killed, they will die," says Howle (a statement which makes sense only to those involved with the graphic medium—or with zombies). "None of this Jean Grey stuff—once you're dead in our world, you're dead."

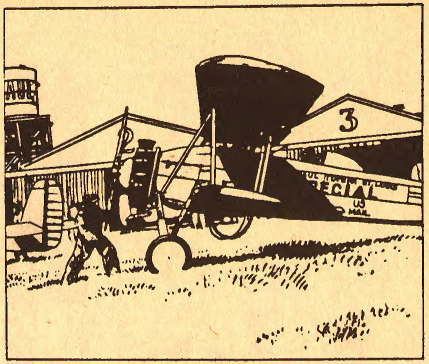
Howle adds she's just been named co-editor (with Joseph Daltry) of ***Japanimation***. The magazine will be transformed somewhat, and will contain translations of animated stories, cels and transparencies, giveaways (fill out a card and receive a gift!), spotlights, on notable characters and series. —ABC—

ACES

Written and drawn by VARIOUS, edited by CEFN RIDOUT

32 color pages, $2.95, bi-monthly from ACME PRESS

Aiming to present top quality European strips in serialized format, ***Aces*** magazine debuts in April. Somewhat surprisingly, considering their European origins, all three strips are grounded in 1930s USA.



From Aces, a panel by Attilio Micheluzzi from the "Air Mail" series.

Firstly there's *Air Mail*, concerning an aviator whose job brings him into contact with a selection of the seedier citizens of the period. It's written and drawn by the Italian cartoonist Attilio Micheluzzi (seen in a few of Eclipse's horror comics).

Each *Air Mail* story is expected to run for four issues, contrasting with the 10-page self-contained *Morgan* strips by the Spanish team of Antonio Segura and Jose Ortiz. Morgan is a convict incarcerated in Sing Sing, and the focus for stories looking at life behind bars.

The third strip, *Hollywood Eye*, presents the career of a private detective with the unlikely name of Hippolyte Fynn. Philippe Berthet is the artist and the writers are Francois Riviere and Jose-Louis Bocquet. —FPI—

ACME COMICS

Written by VARIOUS, pencilled and inked by VARIOUS; edited by DENNIS PIMPLE

32 black-and-white pages, $2.00; semi-annually from FANDOM HOUSE

Acme Comics is Fandom House's first and fondest publication, a fanzine which opens its pages to all aspiring cartoonists. The publication focuses primarily on work by Colorado contributors, whose only entry requirement is that they stick to a story to completion. "Learning by doing is the best way, and ***Acme*** gives folks a chance to see their work in print," says editor and publisher Dennis Pimple. "And it doesn't cost them 85 bucks a pop to do so.

"The more experienced folks still contribute to ***Acme*** because it's the only forum for certain stories," Pimple continued. "There are more bad ideas packed into a single issue than in an entire year's worth of some mainstream comics, and that's saying something."

Nine issues of the fanzine have been published already, with **#10** available sometime in the summer of 1988.

ACTION COMICS/ ACTION COMICS WEEKLY

Written by JOHN BYRNE, then VARIOUS; pencilled by JOHN BYRNE, then VARIOUS; inked by GEORGE PEREZ, then VARIOUS; edited by MIKE CARLIN, then MIKE GOLD with OTHERS

32 four-color pages, then 48 four-color pages, 75 cents, then price undetermined; newsstand distribution; monthly, then weekly from DC COMICS INC

After **#599**'s Superman/Metal Men team-up, the Man of Steel continues his 50th anniversary celebration with the 600th issue of the title he debuted in: ***Action Comics***!

To commemorate this milestone in publishing, ***Action Comics* #600** will run *eighty pages* in length—that's right, it's an 80 pg. giant, but don't expect it to carry the 25 cent pricetag that giants from the 1960s did.

The long-awaited pairing of Superman and Wonder Woman headlines this anni-

A sampling of covers from the new **Action Comics Weekly**. *Clockwise from top: Superman and fellow* **Action-eers**, *by Dave Gibbons (#601); Green Lantern by George Perez (#602); Deadman by Andy and Adam Kubert (#605); and Blackhawk by Kyle Baker (#603).*

versary blockbuster, in an adventure written and pencilled by John Byrne and inked by co-plotter George Perez. ***Action Comics* #600** features the popular subplot involving the romantic interest between these two powerhouses. The storyline begins in ***Wonder Woman* #16**, as George Perez presents the Amazon Princess' version of the famous "dream sequence" from ***Superman* #5** (for the uninformed, that issue showed the Man of Steel dreaming of a more-than-just-buddies relationship with Diana). The romantic storyline will continue into ***Superman* #17** and ***Adventures of Superman* #440**, and eventually, er, climax in ***Action* #600**.

This 32-page team-up tale is more than just a romance, as the insidious Darkseid takes over Mt. Olympus, truly creating a job for Superman and Wonder Woman . . . and a few other heroes, as well. It's obvious that the Man of Steel and Amazon Princess share a deep infatuation with each other, and the perimeters of their mutual attraction will be addressed within this story.

Following the Superman/Wonder Woman crossover is a succession of four inter-related eight-page tales starring the Action Ace, initiating a new continuity which will be woven into the other Superman titles: "The Return to Krypton." These features reveal that radiation from the planet Krypton has travelled 50 light years through space and now reached Earth, totally devastating the Man of Steel. Driven into a delirious state by the radioactivity, Superman is assisted by a "mystery guest star" in a trek to the area where his homeworld once existed. John Byrne is scripting these eight-page vignettes, with the art chores handled by Curt Swan and Murphy Anderson, Mike Mignola, Kurt Schaffenberger and Jerry Ordway, and Steve Rude.

***Action Comics* #600** also includes a series of Superman pin-ups illustrated by a legion of extremely popular artists: Kevin Maguire, Walt Simonson, Mike Zeck, and Art Adams. Editor Mike Carlin mentions that DC Comics publicist Peggy May invited Superman creators Joe Shuster and Jerry Siegel to contribute to the issue, but health problems prohibited their participation.

Whew! If word of that 600th issue blockbuster isn't big enough news for you, then try this on for size: beginning with **#601**, Superman is demoted to a *two-page feature* in ***Action Comics***. Yes, you read that correctly. *Two* pages per issue. But that's *eight* pages per month, as the title becomes ***Action Comics Weekly***!!

After the 600th anniversary blowout, Carlin and writer/artist John Byrne are passing ***Action Comics*** over to editor Mike Gold. However, Byrne will continue to write and draw *two* Superman comics per month [*see the* ***Superman*** *preview listing for the scoop*].

This is Michael Eury, signing off. Take it away, Andy Mangels!

Thank you, Michael. Each issue of the new ***Action Comics Weekly*** will contain six different adventure strips, with two additional strips rotating in. I know this sounds confusing, but stick with us here, and it'll all be clear shortly (or at least more intricately confusing).

The six strips are:

Superman by Roger Stern and Curt Swan. This will be a two-page center-spread every issue, and will never rotate out. "We're going back to the style of the 1950s Sunday comic strips that Superman had," says Gold. "Some of the best and most adult stories were actually told there first, before they came into comics, such as the Bizarro story and Lori Lemaris's story. We're playing with the conventions of the two-pagers, too. It won't be done strictly as a panel-by-panel progression sometimes. We can lay the pages out differently. Since this is weekly, we aren't bound by the need to have three fight scenes separated by two character bits. We can do a 26-week storyline if we want!"

Green Lantern by Peter David and Tod Smith. Featuring Hal Jordan, after the Green Lantern Corps leaves Earth (with the cancellation of their series), this segment will be in almost all, if not all, issues. Hal will mainly be participating in Earthbound adventures, but an outer space story is not out of the question.

Blackhawk by Mike Grell and Rich Burchett. This rotating feature will pick up right where Howard Chaykin's ***Blackhawk*** left off.

Deadman by Mike Baron and Dan Jurgens. This is another rotating feature, dealing with the continuing adventures of the ghost who floats.

Wild Dog by Max Allan Collins and Terry Beatty. Another rotating feature, this one spins out of the successful mini-series of 1987. "This one should be fairly easy for them to do," says Gold, "because Max and Terry are used to working on short, chaptered stories in ***Ms. Tree***."

Secret Six by Martin Pasko and Dan Spiegle. This rotating feature will close off the 1960s series, with the apparent death of all the original members of the Secret Six. It's 1988 now, though, and a new Secret Six is forming at the behest of . . . Mockingbird? "It's clear that one of the original members is still alive," says Gold, "but if all the rest of the old members are dead, the Mockingbird's motives are completely suspect. The whole team is paranoid!"

Nightwing, by Marv Wolfman and Chuck Patton.

Black Canary by the new team of Sharon White and Randy DuBurke.

Okay, strap in, because here's where it gets confusing. Now we explain this "rotating features" deal.

Say, for instance, that the *Blackhawk* story runs ten chapters (***#601-610***) and ends. The following week (**#611**), a seven-part *Nightwing* story would take its place. But in that same week, an 11-part (**#601-611**) *Deadman* story ends as well. Therefore, the next week (**#612**), a new *Black Canary* story would appear. By now (**#612**), our rotating line-up features *Wild Dog*, *Secret Six*, *Nightwing*, and *Black Canary*.

However, the *Wild Dog* story is 14 parts (**#601-614**), and ends. The next issue (**#615**), *Blackhawk* will take its place, to begin its new adventure. Then, the 18-part *Secret Six* story ends (**#601-618**), to be replaced by a new *Deadman* story.

Basically (!?!?!?), what it means is that whatever feature left first will get the next available open slot, and so on. Got that? No? Well, go back and read it again until you do.

Story lengths will vary, as will page amounts for each chapter. Some installments may run eight pages, while others will run seven or nine. There will be a two-page letters page, and two pages of house ads. Every now and then, Gold plans to run a preview text page describing a new series, similar to the articles done in the ***DC Focus*** of last year, but much more timely, given ***Action***'s weekly schedule.

Although the first cover will feature all of the starring characters, later covers will feature only one character, in an action pose. "We're really returning here to the style of comic that was done in the early days. Books had more than one feature, and they rotated both the stories, and the covers. Even Superman did not always have the cover to ***Action Comics***. We'll have covers by people who do not normally do covers, or who will not be in the interiors." For instance, the first few issues' covers will have Dave Gibbons drawing Superman, Kyle Baker drawing Blackhawk, the Kubert Brothers drawing Deadman, and George Perez drawing Green Lantern—with more special treats to come.

"The main difference is that this will break us out of the traditional storytelling formats. Since it's weekly, we don't have to do a recap or a flashback. We don't have to have every character appear in every week's installment. The stories can be any length at all. They are not held to any specific length or page count.

"This is very innovative, and we really think it will be popular."

Action Comics Weekly will premiere about two months after ***Action Comics* #600**, in April. —MIJAM—

ADAM AND EVE A.D.

Written by BILL A. MURRAY and RANDY FISCHER; pencilled by DAN WHALING; inked by TOM ZIMMERMAN; edited by BILL A. MURRAY

32 four-color pages, $1.50, bi-monthly from BAM PRODUCTIONS

If you were looking for the promised **#12** and **#13** of this title described last *AHPS*, look no more: the title was cancelled with **#10**. Pummeled by the black-and-white crash, publisher/creator Bill A. Murray told us, BAM Productions "took time out to completely change everything." In addition to featuring startling new directions and a heavier emphasis on characterization, the new ***Adam and***

Eve A.D. (listed as **Vol. 2, #1**) features a mostly new creative team (including co-scripter Randy Fischer and penciller Dan Whaling), and will most likely be in color. Look for it in April. —JC—

ADOLESCENT RADIOACTIVE BLACK BELT HAMSTERS

Written by DON CHIN; pencilled by SAM KIETH; inked by SAM DE LA ROSA; edited by LETITIA GLOZER

32 black-and-white pages; $1.50; bi-monthly from ECLIPSE COMICS

Well, my friends, it looks like *#9* will be the last issue for those loveable but naughty hamsters. So that the title will go out with a *bang!*, editor Letitia Glozer informs us that *#9* will consist of a series of vignettes by everyone who ever laid pencil or brush to the hamsters, with a framing sequence by Sams Kieth and De La Rosa. In it we find the hamsters lost and alone, reflecting on their pasts.

But wait! Stop the presses! Those little rodents will return in *Target Airboy Special!* Not much information could be gleaned from editor Glozer, but she did say that it takes place in the Napa Valley, and would be full of action and "how's your mom, Ed.?" —JW—

ADVENTURES OF THE BIG BOY

Written and illustrated by A. HACK; edited by SHELLEY HACK

32 four-color pages; $1.00; restaurant and newsstand distribution; monthly from MARVEL COMICS GROUP

The cherubic, hamburger-loving restaurant mascot with the red-and-white checkered overalls and Ronald Reagan hairstyle comes to mainstream comics in May as part of the Marvel Universe. "Big Boy," according to scripter/artist/creator Alvin Hack, "has appeared in comics giveaways in restaurants for decades. I been doin' his book since 1959. Now that Marvel's publishin' *Big Boy,* maybe I'll earn better'n minimum wage for my work!"

Issue *#1* takes the hero "back to basics" and unveils his origin. "Nobody's ever known much about the Big Boy," says Hack, "except that he's got nice large buns!" The character's origin will establish that Big Boy is actually the son of "Boy" from the Johnny Weismuller *Tarzan* movies, and that his voraciousness is a mutant ability.

Big Boy a mutant? Does that mean that he may join the X-Men? "Hell yeah, if we can make some money off it," asserts Hack.

Big Boy tackles a mobster named Sal Monella in *Adventures of the Big Boy #2*, and acquires a youthful sidekick, Parsley, in issue *#3*. —ME—

Capt. Jack: More character conflict.

THE ADVENTURES OF CAPTAIN JACK

Written and illustrated by MIKE KAZALEH; editorial co-ordinator: GARY GROTH

32 black-and-white pages; $2.00; irregularly from FANTAGRAPHICS BOOKS (Mature Readers)

Mike Kazaleh is vague about plotlines for future issues—sure of the essentials, if not the specifics. "It's all character and acting," he says, "Simply, the idea was to set them up in a situation that looked like it was going to have a happy ending. Then personality-wise all hell breaks loose. The next two issues will be all interpersonal conflicts, getting a long way from the gags [of earlier issues]."

Those two—maybe three—issues will take place on Earth is his 24th Century future. The story, he reveals, will really take off in issue *#10*. "For me it's been like a powder keg waiting to go off: getting these characters together. Up to a point everyone has taken whatever the Captain has said at face value, without question. You got a foreshadowing of what was to come when Janet objected to him going through her suitcase for a disguise [in issue *#8*]." Much of her ire will be directed at Captain Jack, allowing him to take more of the center stage that he has relinquished in recent issues. Janet feels that her beloved Herman is altogether too easygoing, and wants him to stand up to the captain.

Although mediocre sales have forced a severely irregular schedule on *Captain Jack*, Kazaleh fans can find his work in some of Spotlight's new *Mighty Mouse* comics—as well as enjoying his design work on the new *Mighty Mouse* cartoon show. —EV—

ADVENTURERS BOOK I: The Gate of Chaos

Written by SCOTT BEHNKE; illustrated by KENT BURLES; covers by PETER HSU

11-issue limited series; 32 black-and-white pages; $1.75; monthly from ADVENTURE PUBLICATIONS

Adventurers Book I chronicles the quest of a group of treasure seekers in the mythical land of Anoria.

The first cycle of The Adventurers, *The Gate of Chaos*, takes place in the year 3592 CE. The one-eyed sorcerer Tarrus is the ruler of Liam, the most powerful city-state in all of Anoria. Long since driven insane by the power of magic and time, Tarrus desires to possess the powerful Keys of Telku, with the help of which he will be able to open the portal into Chaos and enslave all of humanity.

In order to do this, he summons eight mercenaries—The Adventurers of the title—who accept to track down the keys without questioning their significance. Their quest ranges from the ruined city of Tecumeth to the abandoned Dwarven city of Krakarak (now inhabited by the Dragon Belegard) to places that are even harder to pronounce and spell.

According to our source at Adventure, "unlike many mainstream comics, *Adventurers* is a story that is unafraid to show death and violence. For instance, several of the characters die in the quest, and at least one of the Adventurers sets an entire populated city on fire! In sum, *Adventurers* is one of the most unique books on the market."

On the other hand, it's not so unique that it doesn't already have its own spin-off/sequel, listed right below.

ADVENTURERS BOOK II: The Grail of Darkness

Written by SCOTT BEHNKE; pencilled by KENT BURLES; inked by JACK TORRANCE; covers by PETER HSU

32 black-and-white pages; $1.75; monthly from ADVENTURE PUBLICATIONS

Adventurers Book II: The Grail of Darkness begins four years after the conclusion of *Adventurers Book I: The Gate of Chaos*, with the surviving Adventurers older and left to confront the consequences of their earlier battles and quest. *Book II* is actually the first book of a three-book trilogy that will span 40 issues.

"*Adventurers Book II* will be broader in scope and more intimately involved with the characters," promises writer Scott Behnke. "The plot involves the world of Anoria on a larger scale."

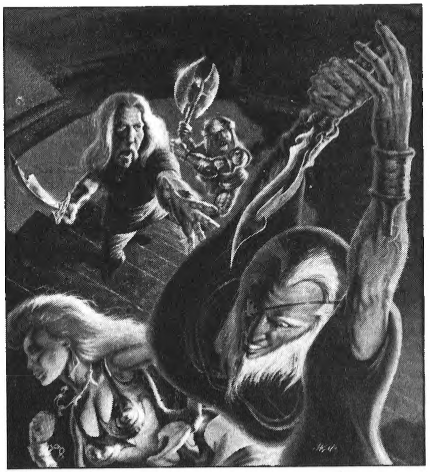
Book II centers on the Shadow Alliance, a religious alliance between the Militaristic Temple of Baal and the fanatical Temple of Accuris intent on taking over the hearts, minds, and rich properties of the Northern Kingdoms. Their only obstacle is the powerful walled city of Liam; so the Alliance dispatches a series of sinister trio of villains to round up some suitable mercenaries in Liam, and then to journey to a ruined city in the Angora Jungle in search of a powerful religious artifact that will allow them to conquer Liam: the high priestess Avienne, the general Barak, and the twisted sorcerer Cherdik.

They succeed in recruiting several mercenaries, including three of the Adventurers, on their quest; two are suspicious, however, and tag along only to attempt to uncover the secret behind the covert operation.

Adventurers Book II will introduce several new characters to the series, including Eyama, a native of the Angora jungle; Histred Armon Adra, an idealistic Knight of the court of Corwyn in search of adventure; and Muldor, a grizzled old mercenary from the Iron Band who brings along 15 men and is in it just for the money.

This series will explore in depth the older, somewhat mellowed and less greedy surviving Adventurers. Shadolok has become a responsible, active leader; Nightwind has more of an identity; Sular has freed himself of his demon and is now less of a coward. Readers will also learn more about characters' inner lives—such as Coron's religious beliefs—at least those who survive the ambush in *#3*.

Issue *#2* will also introduce a new Shadolok back-up series by Brian Guice, in which he returns home to the estate of his brother (Shadolok not Guice, that is), and tries to make amends in what is described as "a Freudian story about jealousy and the relationship of sons to a father, even after his death."



From Adventurers Book II, part of an airbrushed cover by Peter Hsu.

THE ADVENTURES OF LUTHER ARKWRIGHT

Written and illustrated by BRYAN TALBOT

24 black-and-white pages; $1.95; bi-monthly from VALKYRIE PRESS

Born with an ability to shift through various time continuums while maintaining a unique identity among them, Arkwright continues his attempts to avert the impending catastrophe throughout the multiverse.

The fragments of the first two issues will be drawn together as Arkwright manipulates politics on a world where Europe remains governed by the great aristocracies of the 19th century. The exception is the British Isles, a puritan community still firmly under the iron fist of descendants of Oliver Cromwell in 1984, and it's there that Arkwright is attempting to restore the monarchy.

Continuing sequences interspersed with the main plot will continue to chart Arkwright's growth prior to his current career.

Unlike most comic projects today, *The Adventures of Luther Arkwright* began life as a graphic novel before being split into comics, so issue *#4* will conclude

The splash panel to Bryan Talbot's Adventures of Luther Arkwright.

the 1982 graphic novel. The second graphic novel will be serialized from issue #5, but will be available in its entirety from January, when the first book will also be reprinted. —FN—

ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN

Written and co-plotted by JOHN BYRNE; pencilled and co-plotted by JERRY ORDWAY; inked by JOHN BEATTY; edited by MIKE CARLIN

32 four-color pages; 75 cents; newsstand distribution; monthly from DC COMICS INC.

Editor Mike Carlin promises that the continuity between the Superman titles will become much tighter in '88, as storylines will flow easily between ***Superman*** and ***Adventures of Superman,*** and then back into ***Superman*** again [*see the **Superman** listing for further details*]. This continuity correlation began when John Byrne replaced Marv Wolfman as the writer of ***Adventures,*** therefore placing Byrne in control of all of the Man of Steel's titles. Carlin adds that artist Jerry Ordway plays an important role in the plotting of Superman's adventures.

***Adventures of Superman* #440** features the return of Mr. Mxyzptlk, a character that Byrne reintroduced last year. Issue **#440** also involves the new Brainiac, and continues the Superman/Wonder Woman romantic plotline started in the 16th issue of the Amazon Princess' title.

Issue **#441** concludes the "Return to Krypton" story from ***Superman* #18,** and introduces a new pair of menaces for the Man of Steel: Dreadnought and Psi-phon. Following that issue, there will be *no* third Superman book for that month, as the preview entry for ***Action Comics*** will explain.

In ***Adventures* #442** we learn of the Man of Steel's identity crisis, continued from ***Superman* #18.** That issue also concludes the Dreadnought/Psi-phon plotline.

Since ***Action Comics*** no longer showcases Superman team-ups [*see that entry, already!*], the Man of Steel will occasionally be joining forces with other super-heroes both in this title and in ***Superman,*** allowing Jerry Ordway the opportunity to draw some of those crossovers. According to Mike Carlin, Ordway is sincerely interested in illustrating a Batman story, so don't be surprised if Superman and the Dark Knight are reunited in the foreseeable future. —ML—

AGENT UNKNOWN

Written by ROBERT J. SODARO; illustrated by DELL BARRAS

32 black-and-white pages; $2.00; bi-monthly from RENEGADE PRESS

In issue #3 (due out in January) the Seven brothers—Andrew "Jacks" Jackson and Jefferson "Deuces" Davis—will head out to Las Vegas in their attempt to get to the bottom of the Mob organization that was blackmailing their uncle (issue #2). In this episode, the boys are actually running a rogue investigation as they are still technically on vacation and have not been sanctioned to start, much less continue this investigation. Their search takes them to the Silverhawk Casino, run by an ex-Nazi who is hiding from the War Crimes Committee. Once Deuces and Jacks discover what is going on, they must find a way to expose him, without revealing their own involvement in the case.

With issue #4, the series will begin a gradual change in direction. "I know it sounds kind of silly to change direction with only the fourth issue," writer Robert J. Sodaro stated, "But for the characters, two years have passed, and the first in a series of dramatic events occur which will more sharply define both their lives and the way the book will wind up." Sodaro went on to say that up 'til now, the cases of Deuces and Jacks have been sort of light and breezy, with them punching it out, rather than shooting it out with the bad guys.

In this issue they have been sent by the mysterious Director to Toronto, Canada in search of a Division agent who first became a mole, and then a traitor. This is shocking to the boys as they painfully become aware that, not only does the Law Enforcement Division operate without a charter, they also sometimes operate outside the law itself. A second and greater shock occurs when they are told not to arrest the turncoat agent, but to terminate him. Future issues will continue in this vein, as they slowly discover that their black and white world of good and bad guys is more gray than they thought.

As for the back-up, *Stacy Anne Duncan*, it will continue to "jump around in time" with stories that parallel the Deuces and Jacks adventures. "I'm treating the Stacy Anne stories not so much as a back-up, but as a co-feature," Sodaro said. "I want to try and show how two very different groups of people from two different time periods—Deuces and Jacks in the '60s, and Stacy Anne in the '70s—react to very similar situations." The Stacy Anne stories, according to Sodaro, will continue to display a harder edge than the Deuces and Jacks stories.

Issue #3 will feature Stacy's first meeting with agent Larry Haloran (while she was still with the C.I.A. and he was with the Secret Service). This meeting gets them off on difficult footing as they take an immediate dislike to each other. Then, in #4, Stacy calls upon an old friend, Sergeant David Stryker of Mossad—the Israeli intelligence group—to assist her at the ILED. Stryker isn't too happy about leaving his native Israel, but comes to her aid.

Further out, details get a bit sketchy as Sodaro admitted, "Most of these stories have been floating around in my head for about 10 years. So I know what's going to happen, I'm just not always sure of the order in which it's going to happen." Thus, we can expect to see more of Courtney and Gillian (the twins from issue #2), and at least one of the villains we've met thus far. Which villain? Sodaro chose to be cagey on this matter, but promised some engaging stories. "The beauty of simultaneously writing a story that takes place over 30 years gives me the chance to write the ending of a story before the beginning is told to the reader. It also allows me to show how different characters age and evolve."

*From **Air Fighters**, the origin of Airboy.*

AIR FIGHTERS CLASSICS

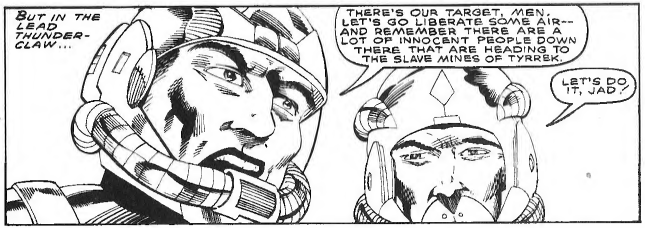
Written and illustrated by VARIOUS; artwork retouched by MIYAKO GRAHAM; edited by CAT YRONWODE

64 color pages; squarebound; $3.95; bi-monthly from ECLIPSE COMICS

The second issue of ***Air Fighters Classics*** arrives in January from Eclipse. This book continues to reprint the '40s and '50s stories from Hillman Publishing's ***Air Fighters Comics***. Editor cat yronwode says, "We have acquired these books, and will be publishing them completely uncensored!" This means lots of racism and lots of stereotypes for liberal-minded '80s readers to get offended at.

Issue #2 features the very first Heap story. Further stories will include other introductions to the original ***Airboy*** (father of the current one) cast.

yronwode reiterated that this book will continue as long as the public warrants it. "We are very pleased with the format of the fascimile editions," she says, "and we have a very talented artist who does the original retouching in Miyako Graham." Original artwork was done by Bob Fujitane, Harry Sahle, Fred Kida, Dan Barry, and Sy Barry. Since writers were never able to sign their stories (and are a bit more difficult to recognize), the only writer identified so far was Nathaniel Nitkin. —FN—



*Military action in **Air Raiders**, fighting for every breath you take.*

AIR FIGHTERS MEET SGT. STRIKE

Written by CHUCK DIXON; illustrated by TOM LYLE; edited by FRED BURKE

32 full-color pages; $1.95; one-shot from ECLIPSE COMICS

This is one of several one-shot team-up books that Eclipse has planned for the new year. The story takes place in the Golden Age time period and teams up the old with the new—namely Sgt. Strike with the original Airboy and his crew. Along for the ride are Valkyrie, Black Angel, Skywolf and the Wolfpack, Cocky, Turtle, and Judge, as well as the Flying Dutchman. The two major villains are Baron Von Tundra, a Skywolf villain, and Goro, the Butcher of Tokyo, who when last seen (***Air Fighters Classics* #1**) had been sent to the guillotine (a neat trick!).

The story takes place on the eve of D-Day, and the Nazis have a plot afoot to launch a space shuttle from their rocket program. As the Airfighters get wind of this they find it their job to stop them. They are of course normally powered people, who may have remarkable planes, but are otherwise normal. Meeting up with the super-powered Sgt. Strike is quite a revelation for them, and a portent that times are changing. This affects Skywolf the most, and the repercussions carry into the ***Skywolf*** back-up and mini-series.

Eclipse publisher cat yronwode states that, "Eclipse's plan to do one-shot team-ups makes them optional to readers who fell oppressed and forced to buy continuing series, which is why we market these as self-contained units. We are trying to give the people what they want." —FN—

AIR RAIDERS

Written by JANES ROSE; pencilled by KELLEY JONES; inked by JIM SINCLAIR; edited by BOB RUDIANSKY

32 four-color pages; $1.00; newsstand distribution; bi-monthly from MARVEL COMICS GROUP

Based on the popular toy line and cartoon series, this title is set on "Airlandia," a world where the atmosphere has become poisonous, and so air is the most valued treasure. The tyrants, led by the malevolent Aerozar, hold the air as their ticket to power, while General Rokk and his rebels fight to give breathable air to everyone.

AIRBOY

Written by CHUCK DIXON; pencilled by STAN WOCH; inked by WILLIE ELYBERG; edited by CAT YRONWODE

32 full-color pages; $1.75; monthly from ECLIPSE COMICS

The big change in ***Airboy*** for 1988 is the return of Stan Woch to the artwork chores in these pages. "We wanted him back," says editor cat yronwode. To accommodate Woch's return, ***Airboy*** will revert to a monthly schedule as of issue #33. One of the reasons that Woch left his previous tenure on the book was that he was unable to work in the bi-weekly schedule without getting farther behind, and his frustration led him to leave the book. In addition, to further highlight Woch's work it will now be on Baxter paper.

In December a five-part story began which continues on into the New Year. In it, the Airfighters travel to the Central American country of Bogantilla. There they run into the same people they ran into during the first storyline of the ***Airboy*** title. This controversial plot involved real-life parallels with current U.S. involvement in Central America, and editor yronwode expects this to be

*Stan Woch returns to **Airboy**.*

Airboy meets the Prowler—sounds like the title of a one-shot to us.

no less so, because they intend to examine all sides of the conflict. These sides include the revolutionary ruling party, a contra-like group, and another underground group led by a "Cory Aquino" type leader, Violetta, and in the middle of all of this the Indians, who are being slaughtered and who rally around a man called Wayne Littlehawk, a U.S. Marine who is also an American Indian, and who has traveled south to help them.

The entire cast of *Airboy* winds up taking different sides. Valkyrie hires on as a bodyguard to Guillermo, the rebel leader now in power, and supported by a little too much Soviet aid. Skywolf teams with La Lupina, the female Skywolf last seen in ***Airmaidens Special***, in joining Violetta's band. Davy Nelson gets shot down by the Bogantillian army on his way to talk to Guillermo and he falls in with Littlehawk's group. All of the characters wind up caught up in the different political slants of the group they are with and inadvertently fight each other.

After this series is over there will be a fill-in issue by an as yet unnamed artist (well, he probably has a name, they just don't know who it is yet)—a very intimate personal look at Val and Davy's life. Further down is a story involving the Confederate Air Force, an actual group of hobbyists who fly vintage aircraft at airshows, restaging air battles. Davy will be invited to participate, and things go a little haywire.

The backup stories are no less involved. As always, the story recounts Skywolf's adventures from the end of World War II until the point where he met Davy. Currently the storyline is in the mid-'50s, and he is back in Korea with Riot O'Hara. She flies military cargo, and the pair get shot down. During this time (issues #34-37) Sky will meet up with Sgt. Strike for the second time, and at the end of this adventure Sky and Riot will wed. This issue will be a huge guest shot issue featuring among others: Victory and his Flying Saucer, Iron Ace, Bald Eagle, Sgt. Strike, Skinny McGinty, and every other Airfighter you can think of, except the original Airboy (for reasons which will be explored in the ***Airboy Graphic Album*** in June).

As longtime readers know, Skywolf in the '80s is an embittered, confirmed bachelor, and this '50s story is part of Chuck Dixon's inevitable leading back up to present day and what went wrong. After the wedding, Sky and Riot, feeling with the advent of super heroes like Sgt. Strike that they can retire to the easy life in a split level home in Glendale. There he is called Larry by his friends and they settle into married life. Unfortunately tragedy is just around the corner. This all leads to the ***Skywolf*** mini-series [*coincidentally previewed under the S's*]. The Skywolf backup series is being illustrated by Dan Spiegle, who draws upon his own personal WW II experiences to accurately illustrate his adventures.

While Skywolf journeys to his own book, The Heap takes over the back-up pages here for a three-issue slot. The three stories, written by Lou Mougin and Len Wein, chronicle what happened to The Heap from the 1940s to the present. It also takes a look at his family, the Von Immelmans. Baron Von Immelman, the man who became The Heap in WW I, was shown to have a wife and child in the old series, and we revisit them. Although we see several members of The Heap's family he does not know who they are, but interacts with them. Len Wein became a part of this tale because he will script the ***Heap*** mini-series scheduled for next fall. —ss—

AIRBOY MEETS THE PROWLER SPECIAL

Written by CHUCK DIXON, TIM TRUMAN & MICHAEL H. PRICE. Art by JOHN K. SNYDER III & GRAHAM NOLAN; edited by CAT YRONWODE

32 black-and-white pages, $1.95, one-shot from ECLIPSE COMICS

This one-shot issue (at least for this year) teams two of Eclipse's most popular characters for the fist time. In it, Davy Nelson (Airboy) meets Scott Kida, the new Prowler, through the machinations of Leo Kragg, the old Prowler (got it?). The story fits in between ***The Prowler*** #4 and 5, and before Airboy goes to Bogantilla [*see* ***Airboy*** *preview*].

The story is about Leo desiring to have Scott have an adventure with a real hero, and therefore manipulates this meeting with Airboy. Scott takes the whole thing very seriously and winds up disillusioned by the whole affair.

The story was written by Tim Truman and Chuck Dixon. The two wanted to avoid having their characters meet in a generic situation, so each wrote his own character's dialogue, and the flavor of both is maintained, making this an accurate part of each book's storyline. Plans were made for this crossover when *Prowler* was first envisioned, and since both books were about to begin long multi-issue stories, this seemed like a good time. —ss—

AKIRA

Written and illustrated by KATSUHIRO OTOMO. Americanization by JO DUFFY, colored by STEVE OLIFF, edited by DAN CHICHESTER

64 four-color pages, $3.25 (tentative), monthly from MARVEL COMICS

Just in case there is any doubt as to whether the American editions of Japanese comic books are really selling or not, Marvel has announced that, starting in April or May 1988, it will begin the American edition of Katsuhiro Otomo's s-f thriller *Akira*. This will be a 64-page monthly comic book selling for probably $3.25. You don't plan a monthly comic book priced at $3.25 unless you've got a lot of confidence that it's going to sell well.

Marvel's Archie Goodwin describes *Akira* as containing "some of the best and most exciting artwork to appear to date in Japanese comics." A lot of Japanese fans have been saying that about practically everything that Otomo does. He is one of Japan's top comic-art superstars of the 1980s, the equivalent of John Byrne or Frank Miller in current American fan popularity. *Akira* is his longest and most famous work to date. It has been running serially in *Young Magazine* since December 1982, and has just concluded at around 1,500 pages. Otomo is working closely with Tokyo Movie Shinsha, one of Japan's leading animation studios (the producer of such TV cartoons for the American market as

ADVERTISEMENT ADVERTISEMENT ADVERTISEMENT

ECLIPSE COMICS TOP OF THE NEWS PAGE 9

New Adventure Begins In *Kamui*

Ninja Manga Thriller Takes Surprising Turn

With *The Legend of Kamui* #13, the first American book in this samurai adventure tale comes to a close in an ending both barbaric and beautiful. "Issue #12 is probably the most shocking in the series to date," says editor Fred Burke, "with number 13 wrapping up almost all the events thus far in one vicariously thrilling burst of violence."

The issue is sure to raise some eyebrows, according to Burke. "These episodes are so radically different from anything in conventional American comics, so dramatic in terms of story content, that I have to say I was left shaking when I first read the translations," he says.

A new book, "Sword Wind," begins with issue #14. "In 'Sword Wind,' Kamui's gripping journey continues," says Satoru Fujii, co-translator on the series. "The Iga ninja organization is still chasing Kamui, and they now order Utsuse to kill Kamui. Utsuse will become Kamui's fierce rival. At the same time, Utsuse himself is being pursued by samurai of the Yagyu clan, because he stole some of their secret sword techniques. As Kamui, Utsuse, the Iga ninja, and the Yagyu samurai meet and interact, the plot and characters grow more and more complicated."

"There really is no transition between these two books," Burke says. "The character known as Fudo provides a linking thread and major plot impetus to 'Sword Wind,' but the new book really stands on its own. 'The Island of Sugaru' ends completely, and a whole new cast of characters takes centerstage. In fact, Kamui himself doesn't even appear for an issue or two.

KAMUI™

"It's important for readers to remember," says Burke, "that Utsuse is merely Kamui's symbolic alter ego. Yes, they are sworn enemies, but both are outside the rigid social structure of feudal Japan. Both are trying to keep their individuality. Their rivalry will form the focus of the next twenty issues." Along the way, Shirato will devote whole issues to Utsuse or Kamui or peripheral characters associated with only one of them. "It grows increasingly complex," Burke says, "but that's why it needed to be a bi-weekly. You've got to keep in mind that *Kamui* isn't just one novel, it's a series. Now's the time to open book two."

The Legend of Kamui is a full-length, 32-page, bi-weekly in the quality black and white format. Co-published by Eclipse International and Viz Comics, it retails for $1.50.

SHIPPING
Eclipse Comics Shipping November 17, 1987
Liberty Project #6
Kamui #13
Eclipse Extra #38
Miracleman #13
Tales of the Beanworld #8

Art © 1987 Selby Kelly

Christmas Classics Reprints Walt Kelly Holiday Favourites

This holiday season, *Walt Kelly's Christmas Classics* #1 will make available at an affordable cost two rare favourites from the creator of *Pogo*. "It's the perfect comic book to read with a youngster on Christmas Eve," says editor Fred Burke. "The Walt Kelly art is enough to make any true comics fan melt, and the stories will captivate every child from three to three hundred. We chose a wonderful adventure tale starring Peter Wheat and Santa Claus, plus a charming Christmas party with Santa and some of Kelly's acclaimed funny animals—all recoloured for this new edition."

Burke became interested in the Kelly material when *CBG* co-editor Maggie Thompson sent him some photocopies of rare *Peter Wheat* material which had originally been given away as bread premiums. The sixteen page Peter Wheat Christmas tale reprints in its entirety *Peter Wheat* #21. "Christmas Comes to The Woodland," a tale from *Santa Claus Funnies* #91, rounds out the collection.

After Burke had decided to go ahead with the project, he contacted Thompson to find out what stories might be available. Selby Kelly, the artist's widow, graciously agreed to help in retouching the artwork. The reprinted material will be copyrighted in her name. All that was left was to find a cover artist, and who could be better for the job than long-time Kelly fan Steve Leialoha, who agreed to produce a Kelly homage cover for the special.

"It's really been a labour of love for all involved," says Burke. "When Maggie agreed to write the text pages, I was particularly pleased. Kelly's work means a lot to her."

Already, plans are underway for a holiday special for the Easter season. *Walt Kelly's Springtime Tales* #1 will feature another Peter Wheat adventure, this one a spring flood story.

Walt Kelly's Christmas Classics, a full-colour Baxter book, ships December 8 and retails for $1.75.

THIS IS FIT TO PRINT NUMBER 186: News Notes from Hither and Yon.

THE LANSING OBSCENITY TRIAL: Well, believe it or don't, the trial against Friendly Frank, his store manager Mike Correa, and an assortment of comic books alleged to be obscene still continues.

This is the case, you might recall, in which I was called to testify on the state of the comic book market and the "redeeming social values" of titles like *Omaha the Cat Dancer* and *Weirdo*. I said in my report on the testimony I gave that the lawyers expected to receive a verdict within the week. I promised I'd print an update in this column.

No, I didn't forget . . . the verdict has not yet been delivered, and it looks now as if a judgement will not be made until early in 1988!

Why the delays? I don't know, but the court's shameful tardiness has cost the accused parties plenty of time, trouble, and money already. This latest delay just adds injury to insult.

HOLIDAY GIFT IDEA: If you want to help the fight for diversity in comics, send Frank Mangiaracina a holiday gift he'll really appreciate — a few bucks to help pay his steadily mounting legal fees. He's out on the front lines, making it possible for you to buy sophisticated material like *Elfquest* (honestly, they busted *Elfquest*!), and I'm sure he can use the financial aid. If you're short on cash, send Frank and Mike a letter expressing your support. It's a lonely thing to be caught up by the justice system and threatened with jail or fines for selling comics we all can get at any local store, and which are certainly less "pornographic" than the sex magazines sold in the very town where Frank's store was busted.

The address is Friendly Frank's Distribution, 3990 Broadway, Gary, Indiana 46408.

ZONKERS ARE OBSOLETE: You know those long plastic things they put on expensive clothes in stores, the things that set off alarms if you walk out the door while they're still on the clothes? Sure you do. But do you know what they're called?

I don't know their official name, but tonight I learned that department store employees call these items "Zonkers." (As in "Screaming Yellow) Zonkers," because they scream when the alarm goes off.)

My joy at discovering this little etymological gem led the two saleswomen I'd been talking with to reveal many secrets of the Zonkers. For instance, they told me that the tool with which they remove the Zonkers is called a Zonker Puller, and that it contains a built-in alarm device, making it impossible to steal, even if one manages to sever the steel cable with which it is affixed to the counter.

Professional thieves are no longer deterred by Zonkers. They can easily make crude Zonker Pullers of their own, smuggle them into the shops, remove Zonkers by the score, and walk out wearing layers of stolen clothing. They leave behind hidden piles of damaged and disabled Zonkers, which may not be found until closing time.

"We went to a seminar," said one of the two saleswomen, "and they told us that Zonkers were really obsolete. The shoplifters can even get black market Zonker Pullers now." Then she lowered her voice, confidingly.

"Actually," she said, "I could show you how to pull a Zonker out with a pair of pliers, if you had to. That's safer, because if they catch you with a Zonker Puller, it's an automatic felony, but they can't prove you're a professional thief if you carry pliers."

What will replace the obsolescent Zonker?

"They're working on that right now."

Heading this time by JOHN G. OWNBY. To see YOUR name in boldface type and your art or lettering here, make FtP logos 8 1/2 inches wide by 3 inches deep and send 'em to catherine yronwode, p.o. box 199, forestville, california 95436

FIT TO PRINT IS COPYRIGHT 1987 CATHERINE YRONWODE

Dekko Returns To Battle *Zot!*

Zot! #17 will feature the return of one of comics' all-time craziest villains—Dekko! The mad cyborg with the Chrysler Building head has been locked away since he first faced Zot! in issues #3 and #4, but he's free again and ten times as crazy as before.

The original two-part tale showed how artist Arthur Dekker slowly lost his humanity to a raging cancer. As each piece of his body had to be replaced with metal, the artist's style slowly changed from the lush curves of art nouveau to the cold serpentines of art deco. Castrated by the combination of nature's cancer and technology's laser, Dekko was left quite mad. It took Jenny, her innocence transforming her in Dekko's warped mind into his lost love Sarah, to bring Dekker back to humanity. "I'm sorry," was all he could say as he was deactiviated and removed to an asylum.

Dekko received unprecedented acclaim following that first appearance in 1984. Even *The New Yorker* was charmed (and chilled) by the unique villain. A staff writer said in the magazine's "Talk of the Town" feature on *Zot!*, "Best of all, there is Dekko. Our office window looks out on the Chrysler Building, and often we have stared at its shape; it is a mark of our singular unfitness for the comic book trade that the possibility it might come to life—twisted life at that—never occurred to us."

Zot! creator Scott McCloud is enthusiastic about the return of Dekko. "Dekko is fun to write and draw because I can really get inside of him," says McCloud. "I think every artist has a bit of Dekko in him. Dekko is that crazy gleam you get when you've been drawing for 48 hours straight and you're all pumped up with caffeine and the lines on the paper all start getting up and dancing around the room. He's a lot of fun, but thank God he's not in every issue. I'd go nuts!"

Zot! #17 ships February 23. The 32 page deluxe black and white comic retails for $2.00.

Art © 1987 Scott McCloud

ADVERTISEMENT ADVERTISEMENT ADVERTISEMENT

ADVERTISEMENT ADVERTISEMENT ADVERTISEMENT

TOP OF THE NEWS

PAGE10

Eclipse Climbs Toward New Publishing Heights

Passes Every Comics Co. Started In Last 30 Years

"Eclipse has published more comics than any company started in the last thirty years," publisher Dean Mullaney announced.

As of November 10, 1987, Eclipse ranks #19 on the All-Time List of Comics Publishers, with over 600 comics published. In 1987 Eclipse passed Avon, Hillman, Gilberton ("Classics Illustrated"), and Warren Publishing, among others.

By the end of the company's 10th year (1988), Eclipse will rank 14th on the All-Time List of Comics Publishers, passing Fox, Ace, Lev Gleason, Prize, and the famed EC.

"I think," says editor-in-chief Cat Yronwode, "that it's a real testament to our staying power. We've survived the black and white glut, the collapse of several major distributors, and the flood that almost took our lives.

"Although there are times when Dean and I have to question our sanity in sticking it out, our love of good comics and creator ownership keep us fighting for our place in the market," she says.

"Whenever a disaster comes along, there's always a faithful fan letter or a call from a loyal writer or artist to remind us of what Eclipse is all about," says Yronwode.

"As we enter our tenth year," Mullaney says, "I look back with a sense of amazement and accomplishment. The new ground that we paved in comics has become a path followed by an entire industry." Eclipse introduced the graphic album to America and pioneered high quality printing techniques such as Baxter paper and laser-scanned colour.

As the father of independent comics, Mike Friedrich, says, "Eclipse picked up the Star*Reach banner and ran with it." An entire industry of independent publishers has grown up around Eclipse's trailblazing.

"It's been a long ten years," says Mullaney. "But it's been well worth it.

"And the best is yet to come."

SHIPPING

Eclipse Comics Shipping December 1

Xenon #1
Airboy #34
Kamui #14
Dreamery #7

Art © 1987 Bo Hampton

Hampton Four Creative Team On *Lost Planet*

Four members of the Hampton clan will combine their efforts in *The Lost Planet* #4, scheduled to ship in December. Written by Bo Hampton and Bunny Hampton-Mack, the lead story is illustrated by Bo and lettered by Tracy Hampton. The "Devil's Eye" back-up is written by Burey and illustrated by Scott Hampton.

The four siblings form a talented crew. With its incredibly detailed linework and action-packed yet still lyrical storyline, *The Lost Planet* has caught the eye of discerning fans and critics alike.

The disappearances of Ambrose Bierce and Amelia Earhart provide the factual base for this fantasy populated with prehistoric beasts, savage tribes, and magic spells. From a kingdom ruled by the evil Zorrin, those trapped on the Lost Planet try desperately to escape. But one of them secretly plots a revenge that could trap them all on the Lost Planet forever.

Fan favourite Bo Hampton has worked on projects as varied as last year's *Lagar* mini-series written by Bruce Jones, the two-part "Third Mission" *Airboy* tale written by Chuck Dixon, and a variety of short stories for Bruce Jones' acclaimed anthology books.

Lost Planet editor Letitia Glozer is perhaps the series' greatest fan, saying "Pick it up! Read it! It's wonderful! Really, I'm not just spewing forth all kinds of meaningless hyperbole—Bo has created something really great here, with a lot of other wonderful people joining in on the project.

"Bo learned visual storytelling from the master—Will Eisner—and it really shows. His overall design, coupled with his fine line work, makes for an exceptional book," concludes Glozer.

The Lost Planet features full colour by Tom Littlejohn. The Baxter book retails for $1.75.

THIS IS FIT TO PRINT NUMBER 188: Leftover turkey on a plate.

POSTER OFFER UPDATE: A few months ago Eclipse ran a free poster offer announcement in our comics: send in a large self-addressed stamped envelope and receive seven different full-colour promotional posters. We had already given away about ten thousand copies through the distributor-retailer network and at conventions, but we had a yen to send the remainder of the posters directly to fans.

Well, two thousand poster requests later, we ran out of some (but not all) varieties of the posters, with about five hundred orders not yet filled. Rather than send only four or five posters, or return the unused envelopes, we're holding on to the requests until we get something else printed to give away. Looks like the Xenon poster, which will be here shortly, will have to do, along with some oddities fans don't usually get to see, such as the Eclipse Catalogue (the one we send to foreign publishers who enquire about licensing our titles) and a bunch of other goodies like that.

The reason I wanted to put this info into print is to forestall those of you who are awaiting posters from sending in DUPLICATE stamped envelopes, thinking your first one got lost in the mail. You may not get the seven posters originally advertised, but you'll get some of them, and some other stuff, and next year we'll be sure to print more posters, we promise!

I know this opens up another subject: Now all the people who DID get their seven posters want to know how to get the Xenon poster and the Eclipse catalogue. Okay, if this applies to you, send a 9 by 12 inch self addressed stamped envelope with 54 cents postage on it and ask for the XENON-ONLY POSTER OFFER. You'll get more than just Xenon, but that'll be a code-word to distinguish your request from the others.

One more thing about this poster offer: It surprised me to see that a lot of people do not follow instructions, even when they are clearly stated in print. We received about one hundred requests (not processed so far) which either did not contain the right size return envelope, or did not have the postage stamps affixed to the envelope, or did not contain any return postage stamps at all, but instead included cash, checks or empty air. A few even sent stamped return envelopes, PLUS a check "to cover the cost of postage."

Don't they teach this subject in school anymore? I learned all about self-addressed, stamped return envelopes in grade school. One day Mrs. Lawrence came to class with a big brown bag full of coupons she had clipped out. The coupons offered a variety of free items. Everyone in class closed their eyes and picked a coupon out of the bag. Then we sat down and made up our stamped, self-addressed envelopes. We sent off for free booklets and toys and masks and recipes and surprises and stuff. A lot of them came from Pueblo, Colorado. When we got them, we took them to class for show-and-tell. It was lots of fun. It also prepared us for a life as comic book fans, come to think of it.

The only thing we didn't learn from Mrs. Lawrence was about International Postal Reply Coupons. It took me another twenty years to plumb their secrets. I'll say one thing for our foreign fans, though: If they can't get U.S. stamps to send us, they always include those little reply coupons that look like scrap paper but are worth real money at any post office in the world. I herewith give thanks to the unknown beings who teach that trick to every comic book fan who don't live in this country. To all the Mrs. Lawrences abroad, a hearty thanks.

Heading this time by ROBERT CUNIGLO. To see YOUR name in boldface type and your art or lettering here, make FtP logos 8 1/2 inches wide by 3 inches deep and send 'em to
catherine yronwode, p.o. box 199, forestville, california 95436

FIT TO PRINT IS COPYRIGHT 1987 CATHERINE YRONWODE

Crossfire Cancelled

Issue #26 To Be The Last

Crossfire, written by Mark Evanier and drawn by Dan Spiegle, has been cancelled with issue #26.

"Sales are slipping again," said Evanier in a *Comics Buyer's Guide* interview. "After having gone up when we raised the price and took away the colour, sales in every area except Los Angeles have started to downslide, and [publisher] Dean Mullaney and I talked it over and decided there was no point in postponing the inevitable."

Crossfire, originally a spin-off from *The DNAgents*, was met with critical acclaim and intense fan devotion. Many felt it to be the most human and least contrived book in Evanier's prolific comics career.

Issue #26 will resolve once and for all the mystery Jay Endicott has faced in recent months: Is it a dinosaur or is it a piece of wood? Another of Evanier's acclaimed text pieces on real life in Hollywood will also appear.

Crossfire #26 ships February 23 and retails for $2.00. It is part of Eclipse's quality black and white line.

Art © 1987 Dan Spiegle

ADVERTISEMENT ADVERTISEMENT ADVERTISEMENT

"Mighty Orbots" and "Galaxy High School"), on a theatrical animated feature adaptation of *Akira* for release during 1988.

Goodwin's description of *Akira* is that, "It's a science-fiction post-Holocaust type story, involving that old favorite, mutants created by the Holocaust. . . . It falls somewhere between *The X-Men* and *Children of the Damned*." He might have added that it takes place in a *Blade Runner*-ish setting, although the locale is not Los Angeles but Neo-Tokyo, built over Tokyo Bay next to ruins of old Tokyo, destroyed in World War III. It's A.D. 2019 and the world is struggling upward again after the devastation of the war. Neo-Tokyo is constructing a new Olympic stadium for the world Olympics of the next year. However, the construction also masks a secret government laboratory where the Army is experimenting on mutants resulting from the war. One of the mutants, Takashi, temporarily escapes and is seen by Tetsuo, a young rebel biker. The Army seizes him as an inconvenient witness—and sets into motion a chain of events which the precognitive Miyako prophesies will lead to the greatest Armageddon of all. –rrs–

ALBEDO

Written and illustrated by STEVEN A. GALLACCI and VARIOUS, edited by STEVEN A. GALLACCI

32 black-and-white pages, $2.00, bi-monthly from THOUGHTS & IMAGES

"Well, it's the same old material," says Steve Gallacci, "plus some new guys. That's really descriptive . . ." The "old" material being the continued adventures of Erma Felna, EDF, and those intergalactic conmen, Konny and Czu. Deal Whitley's "High Orbit" will unfortunately be missing. Gallacci's new talent will include writers and artists from all over, but he hasn't signed anyone for sure. One probable contributor is Aircel's Adrian Kleinbergen.

The Erma Felna stories, not yet written, will focus more on her personal life than has so far been the case. The impersonal political and military machinations, though everpresent, will be kept in the background.

Konny and Czu, Matt Howarth and Mike Kister's intergalactic conmen, will be taking part in a three-part story probably called "Debt." Czu—you remember, the centipedal alien—incurs an enormous gambling debt that he can only repay by doing his debtor a "favor." He and Konny (the four small hovering stones) visit an interdicted planet only to be boarded by the intelligent flowers native to the planet (okay, okay—so they don't need to root down, making them more like fungi). The flowers' constant demands that they land must be ignored, lest they be instantly arrested. The next story takes place on a world that has become one huge "bug market." Konny and Czu clean out their closets and buy a table. Howarth characterizes it as a tribute to flea market fandom and collecting in general, revealing that Kister is a flea market fanatic (even Konny has a collecting mania: for those little cards given out by religious converts at airports).

You can also keep an eye out for a Konny and Czu t-shirt sometime before summer. "It's more than your standard t-shirt," says Howarth. "It's actually a one-panel gag." The punchline, keeping Konny and Czu's profession in mind, has something to do with the Brooklyn Bridge.

Other possible Thoughts & Images releases include a collected "Konny and Czu," or a redrawn and expanded version of Kister and Howarth's "The Mighty Virus," with a Karl Kofoed ("Galactic Geographic" in *Heavy Metal*) cover. Howarth is interested in republishing some of his limited-press releases. Also in the tentative negotiation phase is another funny animal anthology title teaming Monika Livingstone with an as-yet-unpicked creator. That will leave *Albedo* as primarily an Erma Felna book, with shorter back-ups. –rv–

ALBERT THE MOUSE

Written by PAUL DUNCAN, illustrated by JOHN JACKSON

24 black-and-white pages, $1.95, one-shot from HARRIER COMICS

John Jackson's sardonic creation has

***Akira**: Apocalyptic Japanese comics from Marvel's Epic department.*

been appearing in British fanzines for the past years, with one strip also published by British Marvel, but this will be his first full-length strip.

Affluent after having won the football pools, Albert buys an American oil company, not waiting to discover that the previous owners have been less than scrupulous with their financial dealings. Conflicts with the Mad Taxman and encounters with alluring women follow. Writer Duncan is using the issue to take broad satirical swipes at American television series, so you may well find yourself recognizing some of the supporting cast. —FH—

Turnaround is fair play in **Alf**.

ALF

Written by MICHAEL GALLAGHER; pencilled by DAVE MANAK; inked by MARIE SEVERIN; edited by SID JACOBSON

32 four-color pages; $1.00; newsstand distribution; monthly from MARVEL COMICS GROUP

Alf, the television mega-star from Melmac, makes the move to comics with three stories each issue. Some are set on Earth (as in the prime-time sitcom) and some on Melmac (as in the Saturday-morning cartoon).

Readers will learn what would have happened if Willie Tanner had crash-landed into Alf's roof on Melmac. Alf will journey to the wilds of New York for an adventure in the Marvel Bullpen, and will split into two Alfs—one good and one evil.

Meanwhile, Lucky the Cat continues to live on borrowed time. Don't look for a crossover with ***Heathcliff*** anytime soon.

ALIEN LEGION

Written by CHUCK DIXON; pencilled by LARRY STROMAN; inked by MARK FARMER; edited by MARGARET CLARK

32 four-color pages; $1.25; bi-monthly from MARVEL EPIC COMICS

As we move into 1988, the first few issues plotted *and* written by Chuck Dixon will begin to appear, and he makes good on his promise to place more of an emphasis on the "military action in space" angle. Issue **#4-6** will focus on fan favorite Jugger Grimrod, who inadvertently becomes a hero and, much to his chagrin, is promoted to officer. Since Jugger hates officers, it stands to reason that he hates *being* one, and much effort is expended on getting rid of his promotion. Dixon also promises more on the "scumbags and losers" that comprise Force Nomad, and and an examination of the repercussions of the Hellscape caper.

Note the addition of new inker Mark Farmer (an Englishman best known for his work with Dave Gibbons on ***Green Lantern***, et al.) beginning with **#4**. —JC—

ALIEN WORLDS

Written and edited by BRUCE JONES; illustrated by VARIOUS

48 full-color pages; $2.95; squarebound; semi-annually from ECLIPSE COMICS

Semi-annually? Isn't that a bit . . . infrequent? Never fear, says Eclipse—with the caliber of work in this one (such as Ralph Reese's "incredible and beautiful" six-page "Looking For Louie" in **#1**), fans will be waiting to pounce on every new issue as it comes out—in quarterly alternation with ***Twisted Tales***.

That first issue also includes an eight-page Bill Wray story, "Jupiter Rising," which is about time-travel; an eight-page Eric Shanna story, "Boots and Jackets," described by Jones as a "tribute to Al Williamson"; an eight-page Thom Enriquez story, "Phony Express," said to be an outer-world sci-fi western; a nine-pager entitled "Worlds Apart," by Bob Fingerman and told from an alien creature's point-of-view; a five-page story called "In the Meadow," by Mike Dringenberg about an alien attack, and . . . that's all, folks—except for a cover by Bil Stout of a beautiful girl being attacked by a dinosaur. Watch for this one in March. —PC—

ALIENS

Written by MARK VERHEIDEN; illustrated by MARK NELSON; edited by RANDY STRADLEY

6-issue mini-series, 32 black-and-white pages; $1.95; bi-monthly from DARK HORSE COMICS

Coming from Dark Horse late this spring will be their second movie-collaboration comic (after ***Godzilla***): ***Aliens***. The six-issue mini-series is slated to be one story, rather than selected stories, and the series should be completing closed to the time *Aliens II*, or *Alien III*, or *Alienses*, or whatever the hell they're going to call it premieres in movie theatres.

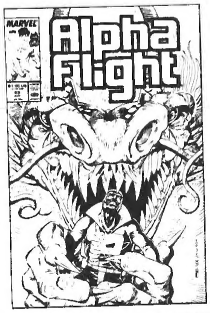
Although concrete storylines are not yet set, due to negotiations with 20th Century Fox (although what 20th Century Fox has to do with ***Concrete*** we're not sure, ho ho), writer Mark Verheiden has definite ides for the direction and tone of the series. "I'm aiming at a middle ground between the two movies; a cross between the total nightmarishness and creepiness of the first movie and the action of the second film. I think that the strength of comic books can really gear towards both tenors.

"Mark Nelson has turned in some sample pages full of some really drippy, slimy imagery. 20th Century Fox gave us the go-ahead on the book after seeing Mark's pages. They're fantastic! We want to give the reader that feeling that something could be hiding in the shadows. There's something back there. We have some great action scenes and also some really creepy stuff. If I were to compare the book in tone to anything, it would probably be to ***Swamp Thing***." Verheiden also compares some of the tone on the book to ***The American***. "I've got kind of a cynical worldview, and a grim humor. I'm projecting this into the future, and hopefully there'll be some really off-the-wall surprises."

In the series, the space marines will be back, although Ripley will probably not appear. And of course, the face-hugging parasites we all know and love will be back in force as well. Although the series is about the same milieu as the movies, it is new continuity, and does not lead into, or out of, any of the movies. "We're doing a completely new story, that will stand alone on its own merits. We aren't just trying to trade off name recognition."

Aliens will premiere in late spring. —AM—

Mark Nelson's sample artwork for **Aliens**, *coming this year from Dark Horse Comics.*



New artist Jim Lee on **Alpha Flight**.

ALL-MONSTER COMICS

Written and illustrated by VARIOUS; edited by TIM CORRIGAN

24 black-and-white pages with two-color cover; $1.50; one-shot from C&T GRAPHICS

This one-shot is a tribute to all those classic Lee/Kirby monsters from the early days of Marvel. "We really went out of our way to re-capture the flavor of those old gems," says publisher Corrigan. "We've deliberately selected artists for the book who have that certain Kirbyesque style. This was a labor of love."

Look for this one to shamble into your local comics shop in April.

ALPHA FLIGHT

Written by BILL MANTLO; pencilled by JIM LEE; inked by AL MIGNORA; edited by CARL POTTS

32 four-color pages; $1.25; monthly from MARVEL COMICS GROUP

Rather than become pawns of the Canadian government, Alpha Flight will break all governmental ties, which leaves them entirely without government funding since Wanda (Sasquatch) Langkowski's fortune is tied up in litigation. They are left with only one alternative.

The team disbands.

As they try to pick up the threads of their individual lives, they will be attacked, one by one, by supernatural forces without any apparent reason or provocation. Some otherworldly power wants Alpha Flight dead by the most horrific means possible.

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN

Written by DAVID MICHELINIE; illustrated by TODD McFARLANE; edited by JIM SALICRUP

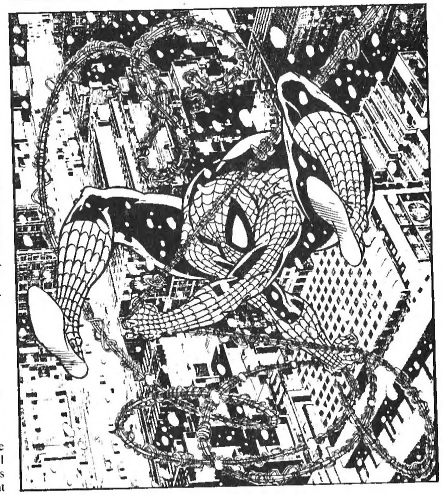
32 four-color pages; $1.00; newsstand distribution; monthly, then bi-weekly from MARVEL COMICS GROUP

There's a lot in store for everyone's favorite friendly neighborhood Web-Slinger in 1988, beginning with a publishing milestone: ***Amazing Spider-Man #300!***

Issue **#300** introduces Venom, a major new antagonist for Spidey, whose existence has been hinted at in recent stories. Venom is mentally unstable, incredibly strong, able to evade the Wall-Crawler's spider-sense, and . . . he has the same powers as Spider-Man! The villain is actually a character connected to the Sin-Killer storyline who acquires the alien symbiotic Spider-Man costume that originally appeared in ***Marvel Super-Heroes Secret Wars***. This black suit, actually a living alien being, was *not* destroyed in ***Web of Spider-Man*** as we were led to believe. Ready for revenge against the host that rejected it, the symbiote melds itself to the body of Venom, giving the psycho Spider-Man's abilities and therefore creating the Wall-Crawler's deadliest enemy.

This leads to another development which will become integrated into all of the spider-titles: Spider-Man's return to his original red and blue costume! With

Todd McFarlane's splash panel for **Amazing Spider-Man #300**.



Venom running around New York in a black Spidey suit, the hero's image is tarnished, and Peter Parker is forced to pull his old uniform out of mothballs. Additionally, an event involving Mary Jane also prompts Spidey to change his costume.

Writer David Michelinie is earning the reputation of being Spider-Man's personal tailor, since he was the author asked to destroy the old red and blue costume in *Web*. . . and now he's the one assigned to bring it back!

The double-sized *Amazing Spider-Man* **#300** also continues to examine the relationship of newlyweds Peter and Mary Jane Parker. The couple will finally be moving out of Peter's tiny one-closet apartment into a more spacious condominium. Michelinie reminds us that Mary Jane is a highly successful fashion model who boasts a sizable income, so Peter's longtime financial woes are over. But he *won't* sponge off of his wife. Soon Peter will receive a new job in a science-related field.

Silver Sable returns in issues **#301-303,** as she is contracted to test the security of a new high-rise building in Manhattan. She learns that the skyscraper is housing some sinister goings-on, and enlists the aid of Spider-Man and the Sandman to help investigate.

A sub-plot that will possibly affect the relationship of Peter and Mary Jane is a job as a scientific researcher that is offered to Peter, the type of opportunity he's wanted for years. The only catch is that the employer is in Kansas, a state that is not known as the modeling hub of America.

Amazing Spider-Man **#304** initiates yet another big change: for the duration of the summer, the title will be published bi-weekly! If this experiment is successful, Marvel may keep the twice-monthly frequency for the book.

Projecting ahead, Michelinie mentions a tentative multi-issue sequence involving the publication of a book of Spider-Man photos by Peter Parker. This would carry Peter on a promotional tour across the country, and his appearances would geographically coincide with comic book conventions in actual cities; for example, Peter would visit Atlanta during the weekend of the Atlanta Fantasy Fair, and so on.

Michelinie adds that the bi-weekly scheduling of this title will prohibit him from scripting *Amazing Spider-Man Annual* **#22.** Incidentally, that annual will tie in with a major project which will sweep the Marvel Universe (or at least give it a good dusting).

Incidentally, *Peter Parker, Spectacular Spider-Man* has been shortened to just *Spectacular Spider-Man*—so don't go looking for it under the "P"s. —ME—

THE AMERICAN

Written by MARK VERHEIDEN, pencilled by CHRIS WARNER, inked by ART NICHOLS, edited by RANDY STRADLEY

A Chris Warner cover for **The American.**

32 black-and-white pages, $1.75, bi-monthly from DARK HORSE COMICS

The American will wrap up its first story in issue #4, concluding the mystery of The American's origins. Who is The American? Who is McLoughlin? Who is Kid America? What's in Sterile Room #1? Why are all these terrible things happening to reporter Dennis Hough? And, where does the series go from here?

The last question is answered in issue #5, in what writer Mark Verheiden is saying will be a "new direction." Artist Chris Warner may continue on the series from here, but it is likely that the book will gain a new art team as of this issue as well. "I'm doing sort-of a take-off on the Iran/Contra hearings," says Verheiden. "Congressional hearings are set up to investigate The American. The motivations behind The American and McLoughlin will be probed, and reporter Dennis Hough may find himself with the story of the decade at last! Also in this issue will be the strangest witness ever to appear at a congressional hearing. There will be a big debate over whether or not this witness should be able to testify or not. This is a really strange and funny issue, which discusses, among other things, animal intelligence!"

The next storyline will begin in issue #6. Since The American has been somewhat disgraced, he becomes very distressed, and is easy prey for a religious cult. Brainwashed, he becomes a member of the cult's community. When Hough and his girlfriend try to rescue him, they run into a lot of problems, not the least of which is the moral dilemma facing Hough. "The American seems happy in the community, but was not happy in the real world. If Hough deprograms him, he'll be back to being depressed. The cult is not necessarily a bad thing. It's not a great thing, but I'm trying to give it a little ambiguousness to where each reader will have to decide for themselves whether or not the cult is good or bad." Complicating matters is the outside community who feels the cult is bad, and is taking up arms against the cult's community.

A team-up with *The Mark*, Dark Horse's color series, is in the planning stages, and short, original "Golden Age" stories of the American will continue to be printed. Just recently, *The American* was optioned for television by Group WTV, as a live-action TV show.

For all of those who've been scanning this page in search of *American Flagg!*, it's been retitled *Howard Chaykin's American Flagg* and is now way the hell toward the middle of the book. This retitling business has got to stop! —AM—

AMERICAN SPLENDOR

Written by HARVEY PEKAR, illustrated by VARIOUS

56 black-and-white pages, $3.00, annual, published by HARVEY PEKAR

Some comic book readers set their calendar by the publication of Overstreet's Price Guide, others by the San Diego Con, and others still by *Amazing Heroes Preview Specials*. (Some poor jokers set it by *Ms. Mystic*.) But for a certain rarefied breed, the lapse of a year in comics is noted around May with the publication of *American Splendor*, this year releasing issue **#13**.

American Splendor is published "from off the streets of Cleveland" where Harvey Pekar lives with his third wife Joyce Brabner (editor of Eclipse's ***Real War Stories***), and works as a file clerk at a Veterans hospital. Each issue contains several autobiographical short stories—with subjects such as catching a cold or mooching donuts. By planting the reader on a human scale, he offers a welcome respite from the dramatic heights and contrivances of virtually every other comic book.

In the last two years, Pekar's career of money-losing and perseverant self-publishing has begun to be rewarded. He's gained two well received ***American Splendor*** collections from Doubleday Books; guest spots on *Late Night With David Letterman* so often that he had to join a television union; an offer for his own tv show (he declined); and a play based on his comics produced in Washington D.C.. Still, it is his new comics work which people turn to yearly to obtain the nutrients that sustain their optimism in comics.

All there's really to say about this year's edition, however: is don't worry, it's coming. Nothing is definitely slated this far ahead, except that Donald (*Megaton Man, Border Worlds*) Simpson, in his first contribution to Pekar, has drawn one page. Other stories, including one about the author's fourth and most potent Letterman appearance, are tentatively scheduled to be drawn by regulars Val Mayerik, Joe Zabel, Gary Dumm, and Drew Friedman, plus first timers Mark Zingarelli (whose solo comic ***Real Life*** is on its way from Fantagraphics Books), and Rebecca Huntington. —TP—

THE ANIVERSE

Written by RANDY ZIMMERMAN, pencilled by KIRK JARVINEN, inked by RANDY ZIMMERMAN, edited by PETER FOLLO

32 black-and-white pages, $1.95, bi-monthly from WEEBEE COMICS

The Aniverse is a new title from WeeBee Comics, but it continues the story line from the six-issue *Tales from the Aniverse* published by Arrow comics. So the plot has considerable momentum already. The former title was structured as a series of independent (but sometimes overlapping) short stories set in a science-fictional "ANI (MAL UNI)VERSE of the future," mostly centering upon a space station, the *S.S. Heep*. In the new magazine, the independent stories have been blended together into a single continuing serial with a large cast, who do *not* all appear in every issue. The focus will drift around, soap-opera style, from one group of characters to another every few issues.

Nineteen eighty-eight begins with the serial "Calamity" in progress. Raffin Falterous, the "good guy" space pirate, is on the *Heep* incognito for a little R&R. This has not fooled Gore, the psychotic zebra-unicorn mercenary assassin, who has been hired to murder Falterous. The battle between the two is likely to destroy the entire *Heep*. Or is there a third party who is deliberately sabotaging the *Heep*?

"The 'Calamity' storyline will continue through the fourth issue with a dramatic ending," says Randy Zimmerman. "I won't spoil it for you. Let's just say that the title 'Calamity' will be very apparent, and fitting."

Included in the next few issues are such things as a fight between freelance assassin Gore and bounty-hunting Ms. Chevious, the beginning of an assumed romance between space trucker J.B. Space and Ms. Chevious, a drunken but cavaliering Ganda, an angered and enraged pirate leader Falterous, and a contemplation of suicide by ranger Retro Ram. "It won't be dull by any means," adds Zimmerman.

If all goes as planned, issue **#5** will feature the return of Varcel. Varcel was originally seen in the "Varcel's Vixens" stories that appeared in the second and sixth issues of ***Tales from the Aniverse***.

The Aniverse will continue to feature the pencils of Kirk Jarvinen [starting with **#2**]. "Kirk's pencils have given ***The Aniverse*** the exact look that we saw for the book," editor Pete Follo stated. "We were very fortunate to have found him."

"I can't think of anything else that I'd rather be doing," Jarvinsen added.

The character "endorsement ads" that began on the back cover of **#3** will continue to appear about every other issue. Current plans call for a J.B. Space "Aniversal Express Card" ad, as well as Squamatta pushing "Host S Twonkies,

The Aniverse loses its "Tales" and gains a new publisher.

The only food made to throw."

Also continuing in the book will be the "Aniversal Fact Files," an alphabetical listing of the characters, places, and events that are featured in ***The Aniverse***. As well as the "What's Going On Here?" page that will keep readers informed of the goings on of the featured characters in each individual issue of ***The Aniverse***.

—FPs—

AQUAMAN SPECIAL

Written by DAN MISHKIN and GARY COHN; illustrated by GEORGE FREEMAN and MARK PACELLA; edited by BARBARA RANDALL

one-shot; 48 four-color pages; $1.25; newsstand distribution; from DC COMICS INC.

Good afternoon, and welcome to Church Chat. I'm the Church lady, and we're going to be discussing some things you should watch out for in the future. Well, what have we here? A nasty little tract put out by one of those purveyors of filth, the comic book publishers. Frankly, I see nothing the teeniest bit comic about this little booklet. Hmmm, let's see.

Well, I see that the so-called hero of the piece wears a skin-tight costume. Could this be perhaps to excite the young female readers with tantalizing glimpses of his naughty bits? Oh, I don't know.

And how did this blond he-man get onto the moon, one might ask? Could it be... supernatural effects from some lower region? Meanwhile, this man's supposed wife Mera cavorts around underwater with his double in another skin-tight costume. This costume's orange, though, like the fires of HELL.

Do the readers perhaps find it enlightening to know that this "Aquaman" has lost part of his soul? Could it be because of his lewd manner of dressing? I'm surprised he hasn't lost all of it by now, given the fact that he seems quite proud. And we know pride is one of the seven deadly sins, don't we? I'm sure he feels superior to all of us, now, doesn't he? Well, I'd consider him inferior to those of God, now, wouldn't you?

Personally, I find it just a wee bit blasphemous that this Russian Communist scientist called Magus actually becomes another dimension which threatens Atlantis. Are we saying here that Aquaman's nice little house is about to be swallowed up by... oh, I don't know. Maybe... SATAN!!!!!

Well this little pagan pamphlet seems just to wallow in sin and corruption, and to promote wanton promiscuity and fornication, doesn't it? Look here. Aquaman and Mera actually kiss in front of the viewer, their red lips all engorged and tingling with excitement.

My good viewers should be advised to look out for this brochure of Beelzebub towards the beginning of the year. It's called the ***Aquaman Special***.

—AM—

ARCHIE

Written and drawn by VARIOUS; edited by VICTOR GORELICK

32 four-color pages; 75 cents; newsstand distribution; monthly from ARCHIE COMIC PUBLICATIONS, INC.

At 45, America's typical teenager displays the outer trappings of the 1980s, but is still at heart the same lovable guy we've all grown up with. While nowadays, Archie and his pals hang out in video stores and do their homework on personal computers, the underlying theme of the joys and tribulations of growing up in America is timeless.

For the central character of the saga, no great changes or special events are planned for the first half of 1988—just a continuation of the same hijinks that have delighted generations of comic readers.

Public service messages, one-pagers warning kids about the dangers of drugs and smoking, will also continue—not only in the comic, but also on milk cartons nationwide.

Writers whose work will appear in various places throughout the Archie line during this period include (but are not limited to) Frank Doyle, George Gladir, Rich Margopoulis, Mike Pellowski, Jim Ruth, Harold Smith, and Kathleen Webb. Pencillers include Dan DeCarlo, Dan DeCarlo, Jr., Gene Colan (yep, *that* Gene Colan—didn't you ever wonder what a Gene Colan Betty Cooper would look like?), Stan Goldberg, Rex Lindsay, Henry Scarpelli, and Chic Stone. Inkers include James DeCarlo, Jon D'Agostino, Mike Esposito, Rudy Lapick, and Tom Moore. And renaissance men who do it all include Bob Bolling, Nate Butler, Joe Edwards, and Rod Ollerenshaw. —DM—

*George Freeman's interpretation of the Lord of the Seas from **Aquaman Special**.*

*Still the greatest teenager of them all. (From **Archie #355**.)*

ARCHIE COMICS DIGESTS

Written and drawn by VARIOUS; edited by VICTOR GORELICK

12 digest-size, four-color titles; newsstand distribution; monthly from ARCHIE COMIC PUBLICATIONS, INC.

The Archie digests will continue throughout 1988 to expose these classic characters to the public at large, through major bookstore chains and supermarket checkout stands, as well as regular comics outlets. They concentrate on reprints of vintage material, so if your penchant is for period pieces—or just getting the most pages for your buck—these are the Archie titles for you.

Titles planned for 1988 include nine bi-monthlies (***Archie Comics Digest***, ***Archie Andrews Where Are You? Digest***, ***Archie's Double Digest***, ***Betty and Veronica Comics Digest***, ***Betty and Veronica Double Digest***, ***Jughead Janes Digest***, ***Jughead with Archie Digest***, ***Laugh Comics Digest and Little Archie Digest***), one quarterly (***The New Archies Digest***) and two semi-annuals (the curiously titled ***Archie Annual Digest*** and ***Archie Stary and Game Digest***). All are 128 pages for $1.35 except the two "Double" titles, which are $2.25 for 256 pages. —DM—

ARCHIE GIANT SERIES MAGAZINE

Written and drawn by VARIOUS; edited by VICTOR GORELICK

32 four-color pages; 75 cents; newsstand distribution; 13 times yearly from ARCHIE COMIC PUBLICATIONS, INC.

Its current page count no longer justifies the appellation "giant." But whatever its size, this series continues to present a different title and theme each issue, just as it has since it was founded in 1954. Titles of issues planned for 1988 are ***Betty and Veronica Spring Spectacular***, ***Little Archie***, ***Jasie and the Pussycats***, ***Betty and Veronica Summer Fun***, ***Archie at Riverdale High***, ***World af Archie***, ***Betty and Veronica Spectacular***, ***Pep*** (that's right, the comic that introduced Archie to the world is no longer a separate title), ***Waild of Jughead***, ***Archie and Me***, ***Archie's Christmas Stacking***, ***Betty and Veronica Christmas Spectacular***, and ***Little Archie Christmas Special***.

For a list of creators whose work will appear here and throughout the Archie line, see the listing for ***Archie***. —DM—

ARCHIE'S PALS AND GALS

Written and illustrated by VARIOUS; edited by VICTOR GORELICK

32 four-color pages; 75 cents; newsstand distribution; 9 times yearly from ARCHIE COMIC PUBLICATIONS, INC.

It's more of the above from Riverdale; only in this title the emphasis is less on of Carrot-Top himself than on the coterie that surrounds him.

For a list of creators whose work is likely to show up in this title, see the listing for ***Archie***. —DM—

AREA 88

Written and illustrated by KAORU SHINTANI; translation by SATORU FUJII & JAMES D. HUDNALL; lettering and touch-up art by WAYNE TRUMAN; edited by FRED BURKE

32 to 40 black-and-white pages; $1.50; bi-weekly from ECLIPSE INTERNATIONAL/VIZ COMMUNICATIONS

Japan's popular modern aerial warfare comic book is a blend of realism and fantasy. The aircraft, missiles, tanks, and other military hardware are all modeled upon actual weaponry in use in the armies of the Middle East today. However, the plot—a jet fighter squadron of international mercenary air aces hired by one side in a North African kingdom's civil war—is much more melodramatic than realistic. Still, sales show that American readers enjoy the exploits of these modern knights in flying armor, led by the tragic Japanese pilot Shin Kazama, a commercial airline pilot who was tricked by his supposed best friend into signing up with the suicidally-risky Area 88 desert air base squadron.

Most of the 1987 issues were spent establishing Shin Kazama and the other fighters of Area 88, and portraying the macho camaraderie that exists among such modern warriors. The issues that will appear during the first half of 1988 will swing the story back to Shin's personal melodrama: his struggle to win free of the Asran Kingdom's civil war, so he can return to Tokyo and his fiancee, Ryoko, before his flase friend, Satoru Kanzaki, can win her (and her father's airline) for himself.

Ryoko has been working skillfully as her father's representative for Yamato Air Lines. However, Mr. Tsugumo would prefer to see her happily married so he can retire and turn the company over to his new son-in-law. But Ryoko is certain that Shin will return someday, and she continues to spurn Kanzaki's smooth advances. Kanzaki realises that he is getting nowhere with Ryoko, so while he still pretends to court her, he begins to secretly gain control of YAL's stock.

Ryoko learns that Shin is alive somewhere in the Middle East, and she goes looking for him. Kanzaki follows to lead her off. But before they can return to Japan, they are almost killed in a terrorist attack—which Shin ironically foils. When Shin realizes how close he was to Ryoko, his self-control snaps and he must be restrained by his Area 88 comrades. Meanwhile, Kanzaki is also shaken to realize that Shin is still alive and likely to survive his mercenary service. Kanzaki pays off a Mafia godfather, Giuseppe Farina, to have Shin

permanently disposed of. Farina figures that this will be easy; the pilots of Area 88 are all mercenaries, so there should be no trouble to find one who will take a bribe to kill a teammate instead of the enemy. —PH—

ARMOR AND THE SILVER STREAK

Written by NEAL ADAMS, pencilled by VARIOUS, inked by RUDY NEBRES

32 full-color pages, $2.00 cents, newsstand distribution; bi-monthly from CONTINUITY GRAPHICS

In *Armor and the Silver Streak* #5-8, coming your way in the first half of the year, Armor's plan for the slave rebellion and escape has succeeded spectacularly. Rage, the pirate fleet commander, is spitting mad, and rather than continue his flight, he decides to search for the escaped Armor. The duel between the two has become more than personal.

Armor and Silver Streak, their ship disabled, have landed on the Crystal Planet, where a living crystal holds sway. Although it can probably get the duo back to Earth, it refuses. Then Rage tracks down Armor and they battle a second time ("A greater battle will come," promises writer Neal Adams, "a battle that will fill nearly a whole issue of *Armor and Silverstreak*.") After the battle is done, the boys return to the conundrum of the living crystal, which will help them only if they do something intellectual, or physical at its bidding. "Naturally, the boys opt for the physical — to their regret."

By the end of next year, Armor and Silver Streak will get back to Earth. Rage will be dead. Armor will have a ruby eye, a sun will not go nova, the crystal will tell its story and save 30 billion sentient creatures, Sacraman will give his life for Armor, and life will just begin to get complicated for Armor and Silverstreak.

Note that while the writer, inker, and colorist remain the same (Neal Adams, Rudy Nebres, Cory Adams), this series will feature the pencilling talents of Tom Grindberg on #5, Bart Sears on #6, and Trevor Von Eeden on #7-8.

From Armor and the Silver Streak: life will just begin to get complicated for them.

A page from the original Japanese Area 88 (photographically reversed).

ASTRO BOY

Written by MICHAEL DIMPSEY, pencilled and inked by KEN STEACY, edited by TONY CAPUTO

24 full-color pages, $1.75, monthly from NOW COMICS

"These books are based more closely on the Japanese comics books than the animated series," says *Astro Boy* writer Michael Dimpsey. The first eight issues will deal with the origin of the child-like robot, and following books will feature new adventures in single-issue stories. "There will be action, of course, but the books will be more character-based," says Dimpsey.

Those characters will include some which were already established in the Japanese series, and some new ones. The relationship between Astro Boy and his creator/father, Dr. Boynton, will be further investigated. Dimpsey says that he would like to see how Astro Boy adapts to normal environments, like going to school.

"It's really a Pinocchio-like story, with a Pinocchio-like relationship between Boynton and Astro Boy," says Dimpsey. While Astro Boy is a robot with super-human abilities, deep down all he really wants is to become a real boy.

For readers who may be intrigued with the concept of Astro Boy, but who missed some of the first issues, NOW Comics is planning to reprint the origin stories in a trade paperback collection. —JH—

AVALON

Written and drawn by VARIOUS, edited by ROB SHARP

24 black-and-white pages, $1.95, monthly from HARRIER COMICS

In response to market preference for continued features instead of one-shot stories, editor Rob Sharp intends to rotate regular multi-part strips in this title after issue #13. That issue will all be drawn by Art Wetherell, who provides a conclusion of sorts to the one-shot issued last summer, but must also confront Overman (from *Grun*) to do so. Rob Sharp writes that tale, but Wetherell both writes and draws the two accompanying horror stories.

The fourth Chapter of *Diana, The Power*, is presented in #14, written by Sharp and intended to run until the conclusion of the story this time. Diana received her super-powers from a seemingly empty box and while it's been assumed that she's in control that may not necessarily be the case, as characters turn up who know more about the power than Diana. References are made to a faulty box that had been lost and therefore not serviced for some while, and as Diana collects a team to help here she may be going out of control. Matters are further complicated by the villains of the piece, Zodiac, who've blown a 22-mile crater in the centre of London yet remain unaware of why they've done so.

City Lights by Sharp, with art from Dean Willetts, continues the story of the teenage super-heroes attempting to rescue their sister from the insidious Kraken, and will run until *Avalon* #16. Events will have taken a distinct turn for the worse by then, as the series is revealed to be merely the prelude to a larger story. "Exodus" will also incorporate plot threads from the Unicorn (killed in issue #5) and Diana, and will run in issues #18-21 from Sharp and Willetts, gradually taking over all the pages in Avalon.

Buck'n'Ears by Paul Birch and John Erasmus is a pirate strip set in the 17th century with a pair of rabbits as the lead players. Their quest for the Maltese Falcon's Treasure runs until issue #18.

The final inclusion here is *A Stitch in Time*, written by Nick Cox and drawn by John Short. Described by Sharp as "a modern fairy story," it concerns bank clerk Debbie Winchester whose life changes when she buys a grandfather clock. She's drawn into conflicts in a realm within the clock, which is slowly being strangled by vegetable growth that induces sloth and drowsiness. A mysterious man in black called Scratchman and the metallic Kapitan Automaton aid Debbie in her attempts to save this world. *A Stich in Time* runs until *Avalon* #19, at which point the whole book is occupied by *Exodus* for two issues. —PH—

Avalon: "Stitch in Time" debuts

From Avengers #291, Walt Simonson's first issue.

THE AVENGERS

Written by WALT SIMONSON, pencilled by JOHN BUSCEMA, inked by TOM PALMER, edited by MARK GRUENWALD

32 four-color pages, $1.00, newsstand distribution; monthly from MARVEL COMICS GROUP

Issue #290, the conclusion to the Roger Stern/Ralph Macchio "Heavy Metal" story starring the Super-Adaptoid, promises to end Stern and Macchio's involvement on the series on a high note, as the Adaptoid will be gaining the powers of the Cosmic Cube. Following that, former *Thor* scripter Walt Simonson will take over the writing chores.

Although Gruenwald was a bit reticent about revealing everything Simonson has in mind for the group, he did admit that #291-293 will revolve around the Sub-Mariner and his wife, Marrina. Asked if a super-villain of some sort would play a part in the story, Gruenwald replied cryptically, "They won't need one." Also beginning in #291 is a sub-plot in which Dr. Druid is haunted by a mystery woman from the Avengers' past. Nebula, this plotline will come to a head in #294.

Beyond that, #295 will begin a multi-issue epic boasting the return of the "Cross Time Kangs"—and you know that when they announce an epic starting a half a year before a centennial, odds are the centennial will feature the big wrap-up. Issue #300 will also feature a membership change, of course (where would we be without tradition?)—but we're not going to blow that one for you. Read it and find out.

[For more Avengers news, check the listings for Solo Avengers and West Coast Avengers.] —DP—

AXA

Written by CHUCK DIXON, illustrated by ENRIQUE BADIA ROMERO, edited by KEN PIERCE

32 full-color pages, $1.75, once in a blue moon from ECLIPSE COMICS

The exigencies of working on the *Modesty Blaise* comic strip have turned Enrique Badia Romero's progress on this series down to less than a crawl, with only one issue released so far last March. Should the second and third issues ever see print, there'll be more of the same post-holocaust stuff—with a touch more humor and a dab less nudity than in the original series. Watch for King Sandwich, a villain named after a fast-food

joint, and enjoy the spectacle of wanton chaos as our heroes finally succeed in destroying the Domed City and the crypto fascists within.

By the way, if you want to follow the abovementioned *Modesty Blaise* strip, check out the *Comics Revue* listing later in this book. —JC—

B

BACCHUS

Written and illustrated by EDDIE CAMPBELL

28 black-and-white pages; $1.95; bi-monthly from HARRIER COMICS/NEW WAVE

Stepping out of *Deadface* into his own title, the modern day Bacchus "becomes perhaps the one character of true importance that I have ever done in comics, moving on to an almost Shakespearean level," claims Eddie Campbell. Modest fellow that he is, he continues "and 'The Rubiyat of a Cheap Plonk' is the single greatest story that I have ever created." It appears in the first issue and is the story of Bacchus's mortal companion Simpson. He is carried off into the underworld by Hermes when his allotted span is considered at an end, and spends a long time there before eventually returning to Earth to be reunited with Bacchus after a revolt against Hades. Hermes, however, takes his task of escorting mortals to the netherworld very seriously and intends to leave a clean slate on his demise, so he comes looking for Simpson. That first issue also contains the story of Sisyphus, a lesser-known Greek god ("the patron saint of the *Amazing Heroes Preview Special*," notes *AHPS* editor Kim Thompson) who also cheats death.

Campbell refers to the task of Hermes in terms of "sanctions," and in #2 Bacchus and Simpson accompany Hermes to Greece as he gathers another mortal. Bacchus, the god of revelry, returning to modern-day tourist-conscious Greece appeals greatly to Campbell, as does the idea that Bacchus is enamored of all the particularly crass aspects of the tourist culture. (A bit like Mark Marek's version of Hercules, all things considered.) That attitude slightly offends Simpson, whom Campbell describes as "an extremely educated man," and intended as a repository "for every quotation that I've saved during my life."

Although events follow those portrayed in *Deadface*, it won't be necessary to read that title to understand the stories here. —FPI—

BADGER

Written by MIKE BARON; pencilled by RON LIM; inked by JAY GELDHOF; edited by RICK OLIVER

32 four-color pages; $1.75; monthly from FIRST COMICS

Issue #35 concludes a two-parter where Badger is involved with man's best friend, a dimensional demon, and mad motorcyclists from hell!

After Badger acquires a mutt that he finds on the side of a road, he becomes entangled in what Mike Baron describes as a "trade deal" with Count Kohler, the demon from another dimension. "It's a real funny deal," explains the author. "They think they have a simple trade agreement worked out, but they really don't understand each other very well." It turns out that there's nothing very simple about Badger and Kohler's accordance, and a massive showdown ensues including Ham, Daisy, and a legion of bikers from hell.

"Actually, they were supposed to be *car* demons from hell," Baron states, "but the publisher changed them to biker demons. I want to apologize to all bikers. I'm not trying to malign them . . . I'm a biker myself!"

"Dire Wolf" is featured in *Badger* #36. It's the story of an ancient curse placed on an area of land by an Indian tribe that was once terrorized by Wolf trappers. Nearly 200 years after the curse was made, the Dire Wolf rises from the past to exact revenge in what Baron assures us is a "very scary story."

While neo *Badger* illustrator Ron Lim takes a two-issue leave of absence to complete scholastic obligations, *Badger* #37 and 38 will be drawn by Neal Hanson and Brian Murray, respectively.

Hanson, a Canadian artist best known for his work on *Icon Devil*, pencils issue #37's story involving a Spuds McKenzie-like pit bull who goes berserk and begins to attack people. Brian Murray of *Young All-Stars* fame illustrates #38's "Gabriel, Blow Your Horn," starring a goose who saves a Wisconsin town. Yep, it's another goose yarn in *Badger*! Those of you who are screaming for stories where "the world is destroyed by giant menaces 300 light years tall!" should look elsewhere.

Ron Lim returns as the series' penciller with *Badger* #38, in what Baron calls "the Nazi-Nun story." It's a tale about a former Nazi guard who had a sex-change operation and became a nun. I wonder if the Catholic rite of Penance includes forgiving the mass extermination of innocents?

Baron is greatly enthused over the art of Lim and Jay Geldhof (late—very late, in fact—of *Threat*), calling it "unbelievable! Their fight scenes just pop and sizzle!"

Since Lim is such a fast penciller, the back-ups are being eliminated from the book in favor of 26-page Badger stories. However, fans of Clonezone need not despair, as a *Clonezone Special* by Baron and Mark Nelson may be appearing in late 1988, after certain details are ironed out.

The Badger will also be featured in three other projects this year: a graphic novel and two crossovers with First Comics characters, *Hexbreaker*, the graphic novel, appears in March. (See the First Comics graphic novel at the end of the book for details.) *Sable/Badger*, a 48-page Prestige format book that is currently "in the works," follows Jon Sable's search for the Badger, who happens to be one of a group of Viet Nam veterans targeted for death by an unknown assassin. The *Sable/Badger* one-shot should be released by mid-year. As for the other crossover, see the *Crossroads* entry later in the issue. —MR—

From Badger #35—it's not Mike Baron's fault they're bikers, honest! Art by Ron Lim and Jay Geldhof.

BALANCE OF POWER

Written by PAULA SHOUDY; illustrated by MIKE RAABE; edited by PAULA SHOUDY and MIKE RAABE

32 black-and-white pages; $2.00; bi-monthly from CHROME TIGER COMICS

Premiering in March, *Balance of Power* is, at first, the story of Micky, a corporate-engineered human weapon. When in "uniform" as The Ghost, wearing a white jumpsuit with full facemask, he is a confident, knowledgeable espionage operative, quite the opposite personality he becomes when merely Micky, his naive altered ego. It soon becomes a team book when his conscience forces him away from the corporation and into an uneasy alliance with a pair of freelance female enforcers. Accreting around them will be a cast of super-heroes that Shoudy and Raabe will introduce slowly.

Then in #2, there is a closer look at the corporation that had created Nicky, as they hire the mysterious Samuel to track him down and catch him if possible. Samuel is given authorization to kill in the event that capture is not feasible, a license he determines to use.

The origin of *Balance of Power*'s concept was artist Raabe doodling costumes and heroes, "... drawing what I thought was a character from every type of origin of super-hero: a mutant, a normal hard-working crime-fighter, one with a mystical background, one with technological support; one that's an alien, one that has a transformational talisman—that's Evelyn, one of the girls, with her sword." She's being guided and trained through her lives, and is the seventh out of 12 to own the sword. Micky is another type of hero, one who was created. Still another kind is his "sister," Patti, a polar bear given intelligence by the corporation. It's up to Micky to free her, if he can live long enough.

Raabe and Shoudy have set the book circa '90s Seattle, in an alternate reality where they attempt to justify the presence of super-heroes. Raabe likens it to *Elementals* or *Watchmen* in tone, with a hard, realistic edge to the adventure. "It's sort of an off-beat super-hero book," he says. "There're no clear-cut bad people in the book, and no clear-cut good ones, either." —KV—

A Halo Jones cover by Bil Maher.

THE BALLAD OF HALO JONES

Written by ALAN MOORE; illustrated by IAN GIBSON; edited by BOB KEENAN

32 full-color pages; $1.25; monthly from QUALITY COMICS

Issue #5 of this Alan Moore scripted science fiction series finds Halo settling into her routine aboard ship (The *Clara Pandy*) only to receive the shock of her life when she accidentally solves the murder from the first issue. You'd be surprised what evil lurks in the audio-memory tapes of a mechanical dog! Also, Psi-Judge Anderson is up against the most powerful esper of her career! Cover by Bil Maher.

It's a dog's life in issue #6, as Toby, Halo's mech pet, has other plans for its owner. How can Halo refuse such a heartfelt offer from a wild-eyed, razor-toothed, kill-crazy robot? This issue has a cover by Bart Sears.

In issue #7, after all her adventures aboard the *Clara Pandy*, Halo finally makes it to the planet Charlemagne, where she'll meet Rodice, her old friend from Terra Firma (that's Earth, you troglodyte!). At least, that's what she thought. Halo's life is about to take some major turns as she's got some legends to live. —MM—

BARBARIENNE

Written by MARTIN LOCK; pencilled by JOHN MARSHALL; inked by NICK NEOCLEOUS

28 black-and-white pages; $1.95; bi-monthly from HARRIER COMICS

The disappointing news for all you titillation fans is that your favorite sword-and-sorcery title loses the mature readers tag with issue #6. Although not confirmed, we presume that means fewer bondage scenes and less flesh on display. That issue will be the start of a three-part crossover with *Cuirass* (see separate entry) as the female mage responsible for Memree's incarceration in #1 returns to revenge herself on Charol and Memree. To this end she conjures up the original wearer of the Cuirass and dispatches her after the pair.

Meanwhile, Charol and Memree are accompanying a mute warrior woman to a distant castle that they have been led to believe contains great treasures. What it does in fact contain is great magics that the warrior believes may restore her voice. As they arrive at Castle Grishelm Cuirass is hot on their trail.

A new story begins in issue #9 in a city called Spektros, which differs from your usual urban blights in that it's located floating in the sky. —FPI—

A crossover from Harrier.

BASIL WOLVERTON'S GATEWAY TO HORROR

Written and illustrated by BASIL WOLVERTON; edited by RANDY STRADLEY

one-shot; 32 black-and-white pages; $1.75; from DARK HORSE COMICS

Rescheduled for shipping in February, *Basil Wolverton's Gateway To Horror* will reprint four of the master of strangeness's weirdest stories from his early Timely/Marvel days.

Underneath a tribute cover by Steve Bissette, and an introduction by Dick Voll, the reader can open the "Gateway to Horror" from *Marvel Tales #104*, December 1951. Creeping in next, "They Crawl By Night" tells the story of a man infested with crabs, from ***Journey Into Unknown Worlds* #15**, February 1953. Next, "Where Monsters Dwell" will be shown to us from ***Adventures Into Terror* #7**, December 1952.

This is the second of these one-shots, and is a companion to last year's ***Basil Wolverton's Planet Of Terror***, and which combined reprint all of Wolverton's early Timely/Marvel work. These two books complement the many other recent Wolverton reprint books from other publishers. —AM—

Steve Bissette's tribute to Basil Wolverton on the cover of ***Basil Wolverton's Gateway to Horror***

THE BATHING MACHINE

Written and illustrated by TED HOLMAN; edited by TIM CORRIGAN

4-issue limited series; 24 black-and-white pages with two-color cover; $1.50; bi-monthly from Cat GRAPHICS

This limited series features the adventures of a surreal rock'n'roll band. "Extremely weird book," is all publisher Tim Corrigan will say about it.

BATMAN

Written by JIM STARLIN; pencilled by JIM APARO; inked by MIKE DeCARLO; edited by DENNIS O'NEIL

32 four-color pages; 75 cents; newsstand distribution; monthly from DC COMICS INC.

Editor Denny O'Neil announces that numerous "self-contained novels" (a.k.a. "mini-series within a series") will continue to appear in this title, following a tradition started by last year's "Batman: Year One."

Currently running in ***Batman* #417-420** is "Ten Nights of the Beast," which was actually the *first* Batman story written by Jim Starlin, but was not published first due to what O'Neil calls "the weirdness of scheduling." This four-issue saga introduces a new villain into the Batman continuity: the KGBeast, a rogue Russian operative who is stalking 10 victims in Gotham City. Mike Zeck is providing the covers for this series, and the four issues will sport a distinctive new logo.

New bat-scripter Starlin will continue to inject a gritty street-crime atmosphere into ***Batman,*** and Robin will play an important role in the title. For the first few issues after "Ten Nights of the Beast," loose ends within the series will be tied up. ***Batman* #421** features the work of guest artist Dick Giordano, while **#422** is pencilled by Mark Bright and inked by Giordano.

Jim Aparo returns in **#424**, which "begins our heaviest Batman stuff since ***Dark Knight***," O'Neil claims. That storyline was hush-hush at press time, but the editor guaranteed it would include "a major continuity which will affect the entire Batman mythos." This concept will also lay the groundwork for the upcoming 50th anniversary of the Caped Crusader.

Busy Mike Baron has written this summer's ***Batman Annual*** —ME—

BATTLE BEASTS

Written by JOHN STEPHENSON; pencilled by ANDY ICE; inked by JORGE PACHECO; edited by HASBRO

24 full-color pages; $1.50; monthly from BLACKTHORNE

Natural forces go crazy, as the good beasts (a toad, an owl, and a gorilla) battle the bad beasts (a rhino, a bat, and a cuttlefish?) led by Chameleon. Using old war machines that they've found, it's the Evil Side of the Earth Vs. the Sunburst Warrior. Another toy tie-in to add to your Christmas list from Hasbro. —MM—

BATTLEFORCE

Written by JACK HERMAN; pencilled by STAN TIMMONS; inked by DAN PANOSIAN; edited by SAM LEWIS

24 full-color pages; $1.50; 3-issue mini-series from BLACKTHORNE

Thrill to the conclusion of this three-part mini-series, as ABLE company corporal Nazarene Lugosi, leading a group of rag-tag misfits, attempts to secure a planet. Unbeknowst to him and his men, they are considered expendable by his commanding units. Based on a role-playing game. —MM—

BATTLETECH

Written by JOE JUDY; pencilled by GLEN JOHNSON; inked by JIM NELSON; edited by SAM LEWIS

24 full-color pages; $1.50; monthly from BLACKTHORNE COMICS

Based on the Battletech gaming system from VASA. It's the 30th century, and the Federated Sun System continues an ongoing battle between five separate houses. Using five classes of robots from 30-100 tons, these five houses seek political supremacy. Issue #5 has Commander Gideon Frost put in charge of the most ornery, vicious group of mercenaries. Frost must always fight his enemies, while looking over his shoulder to make sure his own men aren't plotting against him.

We see in this series that the future lacks the technology to repair machines that are disabled or destroyed, and when a group of these Battle Mechs are being transported between planets, their transporters become disabled. Issues **#7-9** have the battle continuing in space between planets. —MM—

BEAST WARRIORS OF SHAOLIN

Written by PETER QUINONES; pencilled by GLEN JOHNSON; inked by BILL STANCIK, then MARTIN LASICK; edited by ROGER McKENZIE

32 four-color pages (full-color as of #3); $1.95; bi-monthly from PIED PIPER PRESS

In legendary ancient China, the monk Dharma notices how unhealthy his fellow monks have become. In order to restore them to their original health and vitality, he studies nature, hoping to use its secrets to find the right path.

From observing a variety of animals and insects, he gleans some helpful natural secrets which he adapts to the use of his fellows. He learns the animals' unparalleled fighting techniques and the basis for the invention of Kung-fu is found.

A mystic sect known as The Brothers of the Shining Palm then seeks to learn what other fighting secrets they might learn from animals. Certain animals are captured and mystic rites take place.

The results? Seven "human" beast warriors! They are: Bear, Crane, Dragon, Mongoose, Preying Mantis, Snake, and Tiger.

The first issue of ***Beast Warriors of Shaolin*** began to explore the relationships of the characters following the events of the graphic album.

Issue **#2** will be more action-oriented as Crane attempts to prevent Snake's death by fire. Issue **#3**, entitled "Come, Lady Death!" will start bringing the Beast Warriors into increasingly complex situations.

With any luck at all, ***Beast Warriors of Shaolin* #2** will have reached the comics shops by the time you read this. —AM—

Whatever else happens in ***Betty and Me****, you can be sure the eternal triangle will continue.*

BETTY AND ME

Written and illustrated by VARIOUS; edited by VICTOR GORELICK

32 four-color pages; 75 cents; newsstand distribution; published 9 times yearly by ARCHIE COMIC PUBLICATIONS, INC.

Betty Cooper, whose character underwent a certain amount of revision and updating last year, is the star of this title. Despite these changes, Betty is still hopelessly in love with Archie, who is still torn between her and Veronica, a situation that will continue into the new year (as well, undoubtedly, as many new years to come).

Now tell the truth: is there *anyone* out

The good beasts battle the bad beasts in ***Battle Beasts***.

there who prefers Veronica to Betty?

For a list of creators whose work will be seen here and elsewhere in the Archie line, see the listing for *Archie*. —DM—

BETTY AND VERONICA

Written and illustrated by VARIOUS edited by VICTOR GORELICK

32 four-color pages 75 cents newsstand distribution published 9 times yearly by ARCHIE COMIC PUBLICATIONS INC.

Last year, this was one of the longest running Archie series titles; this year it's one of the newest. Accompanying an update, making its title characters "80s women," the Powers That Be at Archie elected to "roll back the odometer" and begin again with a new first issue. Thus, if your taste runs to completism, you can still get in on the ground floor, yet collect a title that has three-plus decades of tradition behind it.

Update or no, the title characters remain best friends, yet embroiled in a sometimes funny, sometimes bitter rivalry for the affection of a certain red-headed typical American teenager. This situation will continue into 1988.

Check the listing for *Archie* for a list of creators whose work will appear in this title. —DM—

BETTY'S DIARY

Written and illustrated by VARIOUS edited by VICTOR GORELICK

32 four-color pages 75 cents newsstand distribution published 9 times a year by ARCHIE COMIC PUBLICATIONS INC.

Like *Betty and Me*, this Archie title concentrates mostly on the sweeter but less well-heeled leg of the famous triangle. This one has the added fillip of being done in diary format, thus being "by" Betty rather than merely "about" her, and therefore showing the Riverdale scene from her own point of view.

As a relatively new title (issues #15-23 will have 1986 cover dates), this one is actually complicable by those whose inclinations run in that direction.

For a list of writers and artists whose work is likely to show up here in 1988, see the entry for *Archie*. —DM—

THE BIG PRIZE

Written by GERARD JONES, pencilled and inked by Bryon Carson

32 black-and-white pages, $1.95, monthly from ETERNITY COMICS

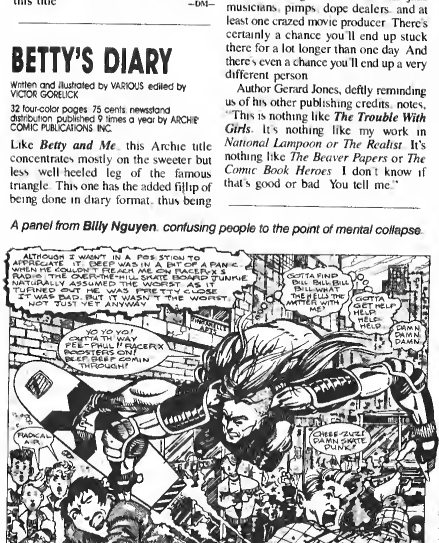
Okay, here's the situation. You're a frustrated, mild-mannered office worker in Hollywood. Sick of the 1980s, you live for nothing but your collection of '30s Pop Culture: movies, pulps, comic strips, jazz bands. You think you know the '30s, and that that would be just a swell time to live.

Then a very strange lottery ticket gives you the prize of a lifetime. One day to spend in 1934. For real. What do you do with it?

Well, judging by *The Big Prize* there's damned good chance you'll get caught up with feuding mobsters, blackmailed movie stars, grassroots fascists, jazz musicians, pimps, dope dealers, and at least one crazed movie producer. There's certainly a chance you'll end up stuck there for a lot longer than one day. And there's even a chance you'll end up a very different person.

Author Gerard Jones, deftly reminding us of his other publishing credits, notes, "This is nothing like *The Trouble With Girls*. It's nothing like my work in *National Lampoon* or *The Realist*. It's nothing like *The Beaver Papers* or *The Comic Book Heroes*. I don't know if that's good or bad. You tell me."

A panel from ***Billy Nguyen****: confusing people to the point of mental collapse.*



BILLY NGUYEN

Written by JOHN HARTMAN, illustrated by STANLEY SHAW, edited by RON TIEMPLE

32 black-and-white pages $2.00 bi-monthly from ATTITUDE ZONE (Mature Readers)

Last time around, this title was listed as coming from Jet City Comics and being written by "Jhon Hartman." Now the spelling has been changed to a more conventional "John," and *Billy Nguyen* has moved to O'Leary Books, which will be publishing it under its Attitude Zone imprint.

"*Billy Nguyen* is, in its most basic form, a story of an ordinary person thrust into a series of totally extraordinary circumstances," says Hartman. "There, of course, any resemblance between *Billy Nguyen* and the life of the average pedantic, mundane, slothful, boring wage earner ends, because most people of that sort usually tend to shy away from the encounters with massive, 40-ton slugs deep within the bowels of underground Seattle while in search of a missing bum who is not actually a bum but rather a guy disguised as one to avoid the folks who are trying to kill him because he has invented a computer chip that is capable of destroying any defenses a computer is able to erect.

"Got all that? Good," says Hartman after pausing for much needed breath. "That's basically what *Billy Nguyen* is all about—confusing people to the point of mental collapse by inundating them with massive data, very little of which makes sense. Billy Nguyen is a private detective in the city of Seattle. Not our Seattle, mind you, but a Seattle in a parallel universe, one in which the South won the Civil War, so that, as a result, the world situation is vastly different."

—JC—

THE BIRD

Written and edited by DAVID M. LYNCH Graphic Designer SKIP SIMPSON

24 black-and-white pages $1.75, bi-monthly from DOUBLE DIAMOND ASSOCIATES

Issue #1 of *The Bird* (Entertainment Publishing) established the storyline of how young, rich Jack Parmenter hired a weird genius named Roland to build him a special suit so that Jack could become a super hero. The Bird. The Birdsuit enables Jack to travel to alternate dimensions, and each dimension is depicted in a different graphic art style.

As Double Diamond Associates take over publication of *The Bird*, Jack and Roland continue their light-hearted adventures into other worlds. Issue #2 (March/April 1988) sees the pair travel to a "digitized dimension." most of the book has been formatted using an Apple MacIntosh computer. "While computers have been used before for comic book artwork, this is the first time digitized artwork has been used, as far as I know," says David M. Lynch, series writer. Digitized artwork involves taking actual images from a video cassette tape, and then scanning and editing them. The computer artwork will be used in conjunction with regular pen-and-ink pages. Lynch does not feel the use of digitized art is a revolutionary breakthrough in comic book production. He and Skip Simpson are just having fun with the new medium, just like they have fun with *The Bird*.

It is soon revealed that Roland actually comes from the digitized dimension, and is trailing his former colleague and lover, Victoria, who has stolen something valuable from his briefcase. Victoria (also known as "Ms. Big") has become the head of an international criminal cartel known as Z.O.M.B.I.E.—Zealot Organization (for) Ms. Big's International Efforts. Roland himself is being pursued by some government organization, which is the reason why he went to Jack's world to begin with.

During their time in the digitized dimension, Jack and Roland spend a night at the Gates Motel (no lie) boause all of the other hotel rooms are booked up for a Rocky and Bullwinkle convention. The plot turns somewhat serious when a young runaway is killed by a vampire, and a big battle ensues.

Another storyline will follow Jack's efforts to upgrade his lifestyle and enjoy his millions. Also, by the end of the first year, lots of hints will be dropped as to Roland's family tree. In fact, David M. Lynch says he may hold a contest asking readers to guess the names of Roland's parents. And to take advantage of Jack and Roland's inter-dimensional hopping, a crossover between *The Bird* and *Prototype* is tentatively planned.

Lynch says *The Bird*, like other Double Diamond Associates books, will go color as soon as finances allow. —JH—

BLACK CROSS

Written and illustrated by CHRIS WARNER edited by RANDY STRADLEY

3-issue black-and-white mini-series 48 pages $2.50 squarebound monthly from DARK HORSE COMICS

Beginning in June, this three-issue mini-series will star the "man at the crossroads," Conrad, whom some people call Black Cross. *Black Cross* originally appeared in *Dark Horse Presents* before having his own Special in late November, and this mini-series will examine his life and the world in which he lives. "Even though no Black Cross material has appeared for over a year, the response from people keeps coming in," says creator Chris Warner. "People ask about it in the letters we receive, and the response at conventions has been great."

Unlike many future apocalyptic stories, *Black Cross* exists in an America which has gone through a total economic collapse. "I don't much care for the nuclear apocalyptic futures that have always been portrayed," says Warner, "although they have their place as well. In my series, though, the country has headed more in the direction it is heading towards in reality now. The economic market has collapsed, and the government has portioned off some 'black zones,' which have been left to survive on their own, much like the old west was just after the Louisiana Purchase. The government is helping the places that have a chance of recovery, and the places that don't really have a hope have been written off for now.

Black Cross, a pleasant looking fella.

"The people in these zones have to fend for themselves, and the law they provide is their own. It's a lot like the Wild West was. If a tag is needed for Black Cross, I would tend to call it a 'survivalist spaghetti western.' When the law and all the cultural underpinnings have been taken away, what do the people do? These people have been rejected by society, so they feel no remorse about striking back at it. Conrad is coming into this from out of the governmental intervention in the Central American wars around Honduras. He's coming out of a war that he realizes is not a grand struggle for good and evil, but a struggle for economic survival.

"Conrad is a person who at one time had some high ideals, but after seeing the reality of the world, and the reality of the people in this worst case scenario, has lost faith in almost everything. He still has a high sense of ethics, but he has a high sense of ethics without believing in anything. He's trying to find a middle ground that he can live with. Rather than being a Dirty Harry or *Dark Knight* type of character with a very specific set of standards and worldview, Conrad has none. He is somewhat an anti-hero. I don't believe much in the heroic ideal as it is presented in comics, and I'm trying to get across the kind of moral ambiguity that I think a lot of comics miss when dealing with someone who is perceived of as a hero. I don't think people are consistent. You deal with a situation as it comes up, and you might deal with it differently six months down the road. I'm trying to show a very personal sense of character to Conrad. He's in a moral and ethical swamp, very much how the world is today.

"Even though I'm dealing with all these political, social, and ethical themes, *Black Cross* is still going to be a good, ripping yarn. There will still be lots of action, and the spaghetti western feel. The background will remain in the background, but it will be there. The characters and how they react and act in the world they live in are what are important to the book." *Black Cross* will not have thought balloons, and the book will be narrated by Conrad, keeping everything very much from his perspective. The character Rita (from *Dark Horse Presents #3*) will probably appear towards the end of the series.

Black Cross will appear in June, in the Prestige Format. —AM—

BLACK KISS

Written and illustrated by HOWARD CHAYKIN art directed and designed by DEAN MOTTER edited by LOU STATHIS

32 full-color pages $1.75 monthly from VORTEX COMICS (Mature Readers)

This title is going to shake 'em up, stir 'em up, and spit 'em out! Between publisher Bill Marks and creator Howard Chaykin, we get the distinct impression that *Black Kiss* will be involving Chaykin in his personal "outer limits." That is, "you can expect 100% unrestricted Howard Chaykin," (Bill Marks) and a comic that will "offend just about everyone that reads it." (Chaykin) and certainly "upset" even the writer/illustrator's regular followers.

Chaykin describes *Black Kiss* as "erotic horror" with "sex and horror gross-outs." It features a hero, a heroine, and a villain, but the roles will change throughout the series. The characters will be mainly concerned, aside from the erotic horror, with crime and vice in the "big city."

Another reason Chaykin is interested to be doing *Black Kiss* is the involvement of editor Lou Stathis, whose previous work (on *Heavy Metal* and elsewhere) he appreciates.

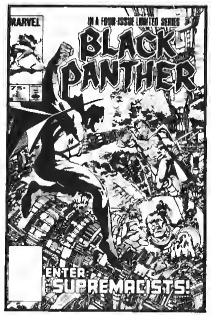
Expect *Black Kiss #1* in May '88. —PC—

THE BLACK PANTHER

Written by PETER GILLIS, pencilled by DENYS COWAN inked by SAM DE LA ROSA edited by MARK GRUENWALD

4-issue mini-series 32 four-color pages 75 cents newsstand distribution, monthly from MARVEL COMICS GROUP

Yes, it's finally on the way. You may remember this title from one of the earliest AH previews. It seems that Peter Gillis and Denys Cowan recently cornered editor Mark Gruenwald and beat him senseless, screaming "When



Finally!

will you finally put our book out?!" It worked.

The ***Black Panther*** mini-series is definitely on Marvel's '88 schedule. It deals with all sorts of political intrigue, action, and a guy called The White Avenger. The Panther discovers the threat of apartheid in a neighboring nation even as he loses the powers bestowed upon him by his patron Panther God. Thus he is faced with the task of proving his own worthiness, and of defending his people from invading, super-powerful forces.

—JW—

BLACKHAWK: Blood and Iron

Written and illustrated by HOWARD CHAYKIN
colored by STEVE OLIFF, edited by MIKE GOLD
(Mature Readers)

3-issue mini-series, 48 full-color pages, $2.95
monthly from DC COMICS INC.

There's only one issue left of Howard Chaykin's taboo-busting revival of the Blackhawk character. Chaykin describes the mini-series as "political and flag-waving" and points out that, unlike the previous two prestige format presentations (***Dark Knight*** and ***Green Arrow***) it has no "injury to the eye" motifs.

"It's got sex, violence, hangovers, hallucinations, communism, and premature anti-fascism," says Chaykin. "The planes have been redesigned to be trimmer, sharpened up, and streamlined. ***Blackhawk*** is now a tougher and nastier book and will piss a lot of people off."

Will Blackhawk regain his honorary American citizenship (and funding) in the increasingly anti-Communist times? Will the malevolent Senator who engineered this be revealed as the Axis agent he is? Will Lord Death Mayhew manage to engage him in an aerial battle to the finish before he kicks off? All this and more will be answered in the third volume, which takes place in, around, and over New York City.

Incidentally, the ***Blackhawk*** series will continue as part of DC's new ***Action Comics Weekly*** by Mike Grell and Rick Burchett.

—PC—

BLOOD: A TALE

Written by J.M. DeMATTEIS painted by KENT WILLIAMS, edited by DAN CHICHESTER

4-issue limited series, 48 four-color pages
squarebound, $3.25, newsstand distribution,
monthly from MARVEL EPIC COMICS

Blood: A Tale, the haunting spiritual allegory co-created by J.M. DeMatteis and Kent Williams, reaches its resolution—sort of—with the release of #4 in January.

"The story definitely comes to a resolution," asserts DeMatteis, "but it's a resolution in a wheel. It can be taken a hundred different ways by a hundred different people, and that's the beauty of it."

Several factors introduced in earlier issues play important roles towards the end of the series. The recurring imagery involving the ubiquitous crows resurfaces, as the story shifts to being told from the crows' perspective. And the hilarious flying quadraplegic called "Little One" returns, playing a pivotal role in the events of Blood's life. Despite those conclusions, DeMatteis and Williams still leave the reader (or the "viewer," as Williams refers to those who peruse this book) with much food for thought.

"From my point of view," says the author, "whatever you think ***Blood*** is about is right. It's almost like a Rorschach test."

—MB—

BLOOD LINES

Written, illustrated and edited by ROB WALTON

24 black-and-white pages, $1.75, monthly from
VORTEX COMICS

Now that Vortex is publishing ***Blood Lines***, the company has its first monthly title. Publisher Bill Marks is very enthusiastic about the book. "It's exactly the kind of unusual material we look for at Vortex," he says. He adds that the book has been cut to 24 pages from 32 in order to give creator Rob Walton more time to produce his best work.

Walton is in the process of telling an ambitious tale which he has structured after Gustav Mahler's "Resurrection Symphony" (#2). The first three issues of the book correspond to the Overture and with #4 and 5, we are squarely into the first movement, "Dreaming Innocence."

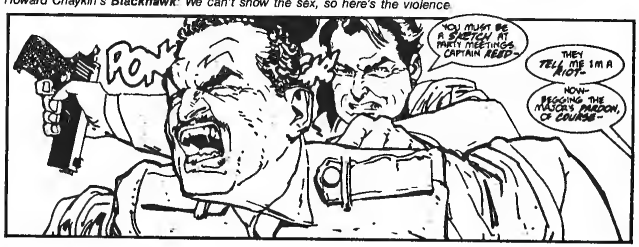
During the "Dreaming Innocence" issues, we learn a great deal more about Deborah Judges. We will learn a bit more about her past and watch her as she reaches a decision as to whether she will take up the duty for which she has been chosen.

The story will progress in a slow deliberate manner. Being a mystery of sorts, clues will be laid out to make the reader think. After all, part of the fun of mysteries is their unraveling. So things will slowly become clear to the reader.

This first movement will also set up adversarial boundaries for Deborah and Manasseh in a most dramatic manner. Meanwhile, the roles of the deities involved (Asmodeus and Abba) will remain ambiguous both in terms of their relationships with each other, and with Deborah.

Abba, who is also the Grey Monk, will exert a certain amount of influence with Deborah. He will figure in her decision to accept (or not) the duties with which she has been charged.

*Howard Chaykin's **Blackhawk**. We can't show the sex, so here's the violence.*



The "Dreaming Innocence" storyline will culminate in the death of a major character. It will be dramatic, and it will be final.

Some items of interest for the reader will give the series a bit more depth. Creator Walton tells us that "Everyone's name has literary and philosophical implications. There is a link between Abba and Asmodeus as their names will show.

"We'll be taking a serious look at Deborah's family background. We will find out what happened between her and her father on the farm that day.

"We will also see these things through Deborah's eyes—it will be her interpretation of the events. With her father being unable to give his interpretation, we will see only one side."

Although there is a lot of violence in ***Blood Lines***, most of it occurs "off-camera." What you see is not gratuitous. "There are specific purposes behind everything that happens in the series. Everything, including the violence, moves the story along," says Walton.

According to Walton, we will also learn more about the cop's relationship to Deborah. We will find out who knows whom, and why. And Maxine will move up in prominence in the storyline.

Blood Lines is a complex series that relies heavily on the form of Mahler's second Symphony for its structure and the Bible for its substance. But above all, it is a rousing yarn with vital characters, fast-paced action and a dash of philosophy.

Creator Walton says that he wants to tell an intelligent, moving and involving story. Publisher Bill Marks says that he is doing just that.

—MW—

BLOOD OF DRACULA

Written by RICKEY SHANKLIN, illustrated by NEIL VOKES, DAMON WILLIS, and VARIOUS, edited by MARC WHEATLEY and HILARY HUGHES

32 four-color pages, $1.75, monthly from APPLE COMICS

As of this writing, the pre-production work on this book has been completed up to issue #12, and the contents slated up to #14. While not denigrating Mary Wolfman and Gene Colan's ***Tomb of Dracula*** in the least, editor Mark Wheatley (who emphasizes how much he enjoyed the classic Marvel series) believes this title of three concurrent series, each one focusing on a different time-frame of the Count's life, reveals hitherto unimagined aspects of the dreaded vampire's character.

For a more complete round-up of the title, you should see the previous issue of this fine mag, a set of instructions that will pop up again and again in relation to Apple Comics, for reasons we'll reveal elsewhere to maintain a certain amount of suspense. "Count Dracula," drawn by Neil Vokes, concerns the adventures of

*A Tim Truman cover to an upcoming issue of **Blood of Dracula***

our anti-hero in his home turf, "Dracula 2199," drawn by Damon Willis, is somewhat self-explanatory. I guess it occurs an hour into the future. "Death Dreams of Dracula" is drawn by a series of guest artists, including what Wheatley describes as a spectacular 16-pager in #7 (a tribute to Milton Caniff!). All three series are written by Rickey Shanklin, who is tying them together in subtle ways that will become apparent down through the years. Also, upcoming covers will be drawn by Charles Vess and Tim Truman.

—ABC—

BLOODWING

Written by BILL SPANGLER, pencilled by JOHN GALLAGHER, inked by MICHAEL LAING

32 black-and-white pages, $1.95, newsstand
distribution, monthly from ETERNITY COMICS

Bloodwing, a new title debuting in February from Eternity, combines elements of super-hero action, pulp atmosphere, and space opera, according to co-creator and writer Bill Spangler. "It's a head-on collision," he said, "between The Shadow and the movie *Blade Runner*."

Bloodwing is set on Starbridge, a gigantic space station at the edge of known space, roughly 1200 years in the future. Four corporations based on Starbridge struggle for any advantage—technological or political. And into this volatile mix comes Bloodwing, "an intense, brooding figure," according to Spangler, "with the ability to sense and manipulate emotions."

Bloodwing strikes out against all of the corporations, but his powers and uncanny manner disturb the people he helps as well. He won't side with any corporation, choosing instead to help the victims of corporate abuse. "If you think corporations abuse their power today," Spangler said, "imagine what it would be like 12 centuries from now in deep space."

The origin of Bloodwing will be revealed gradually over the first four issues. "I don't want to give too much away too soon," Spangler said. Spangler and co-creator/penciller John Gallagher plan to introduce a strong cast of supporting characters and to develop Starbridge's history and culture in addition to chronicling Bloodwing's adventures.

In the first issue, Bloodwing aids the former shipmates of Starbridge Administrator Thaddeus Doran in keeping their cargo—a Kharva life pod with a Kharva in suspended animation—out of the hands of one of the corporations. And the second issue introduces Hound ("I based him on a cross between children's Halloween masks and one of the villains from the James Bond movie *Live and Let Die*," Gallagher said), a bounty hunter.

***Bloodwing**: a head-on collision between The Shadow and the movie Blade Runner.*

hired by The New America Corporation to track down and capture Bloodwing. "The Hound is a vicious killer who always wins," Spangler said. "But he's not without a sense of fair play."

Spangler is a relative newcomer to comics, although Bloodwing has been in the back of his mind for the last ten years. "The story of his creation is a long one," he said. "And I'm finally glad to have the chance to tell it. And while there are some continued sub-plots, most of the stories will be complete in one issue."

Penciller Gallagher also new to comics, attended the Alberta College of Art. "the same school that John Byrne attended." Gallagher brings a unique sensibility to *Bloodwing*. "The look of *Bloodwing* is my retaliation to the look of science fiction from the last ten years. The success of *Star Wars* affected and impaired the look of the genre, and I want to break away from that. "So much so that Gallagher based Starbridge in part on Spangler's description and "a piece of exercise equipment I found at Sears." Rounding out the *Bloodwing* team is inker Michael Laing, who began inking Malibu/Eternity's *Stealth Force* with issue #5.

Bloodwing ships in late January for February sales.

BLUE BEETLE

Written by LEN WEIN, pencilled by ROSS ANDRU, inked by DANNY BULANADI, edited by DENNIS O'NEIL

32 four-color pages, 75 cents, newsstand distribution; one-no time only from DC COMICS INC.

In issue #24, Blue Beetle is defeated by the menace of weak sales, as his title is cancelled.

In the previous *Amazing Heroes Preview Special* it was announced that *Blue Beetle* was first being discontinued, but then revived as a New Format title. That plan has been aborted.

"*Blue Beetle* was an attempt to see if there is an audience out there for a 1960s-type super-hero," explains editor Denny O'Neil. "Unfortunately, that audience doesn't exist today."

In the final issue of *Blue Beetle*, author Len Wein will bring to a close all of the book's sub-plots and loose ends, but the character will survive and continue to appear in the pages of *Justice League International* (they need him there — he's their chauffeur!)

"If somebody came up with a terrific new direction for *Blue Beetle*, we'd consider reviving it in one form or another," mentions O'Neil. He adds that he invited a number of writers to submit treatments for the character, but no one developed a concept that was very different from Wein's version. From his appeal, O'Neil *did* find an interesting idea by Steve Skeates. That idea didn't quite fit Blue Beetle, but it is being developed as a series under the working title *Totem*.

And you've always wondered how they come up with ideas for new funny-books.

—ME—

BORDERGUARD

Written by PETER PALMER, pencilled by ALBERT VAL, inked by SCOTT HANNA

32 black-and-white pages, $1.95, bi-monthly from ETERNITY COMICS

Rion Boyd is just an asteroid miner down on his luck until a savage encounter with space pirates forces him to land on the formerly unexplored world, Nissothen. Rescued, he finds himself in a conflict between the Genetecist rulers and their subjects—the so-called "Milkers"—led by 140-year-old Lian Durrin.

Tensions intensify with the arrival of the Shriven and Orqerat emissarys. They represent two rival galactic empires who wish to exploit the rare metal found on Nissothen for themselves. Using cobbled together technology stolen from both empires, Rion Boyd leads a rebellion from a battlestation orbiting a local black hole. Adapting armored suits, Boyd and his followers become "Borderguards." Their mission: to free the Nissothen people from the tyranny of the Geneticists, the Shriven, and the Orquerates. The rebellion turns to all-out war, the stakes being the future of Nissothen.

In the back of each issue, Peter Palmer, one of the co-creators of *Ninja*, will be providing short two- to three-page vignettes. "I found they were very popular when I did them for *Ninja*," Palmer said. "They help to flesh out the main story and give it more depth."

BORIS THE BEAR

Plotted, co-scripted and illustrated by JAMES DEAN SMITH; co-scripted by STEVE MATTSSON

24 black-and-white pages, $1.50; monthly from NICOTAT COMICS

As some of you may have noticed by now, with issue #13 (cover-dated November), *Boris the Bear*, previously Dark Horse Comics' best-selling series, switched to new publisher Nicotat Comics.

James Dean Smith, creator and artist for *Boris*, owns the new publishing group, and cited several reasons for leaving Dark Horse Comics. "I left for a lot of personal reasons. I really wanted to self-publish, so that I could take the character in directions I had originally intended for him to go. I didn't have much control over him at Dark Horse." In the next year, Smith plans to drop the parody aspects of the book almost completely, concentrating instead on adventure and characterization. "I want the readers to get to know Boris, the boys, and Peter better. I'm treating this as a family unit, rather than Boris always going off on his own. The stories are going to be light-hearted humor combined with adventure, down-playing the violence somewhat. If Boris has a gun in his hand, it will be for a reason, not just to have indiscriminate violence."

THE PUNISHBEAR

Now under new management.

Comparing his approach on *Boris* to that of *Zot!* and *'Mazing Man*, Smith says he wants to have the humor come from a very personal point of view, and also, an ironic point of view. "The humor will be from things that happen at school, or in their personal lives, or everyday situations; things that I hope the readers can identify with. Some of it will be stuff that happened to me growing up." Almost all of the supporting cast will be continued from the previous title, i.e., Boris, Peter, David, Steve, Margaret, Rufus, George, Butch and the Infernos, and the Skateboard Kids. Boris will discover a new comic store, Delight Collectables, run by Ron. Mrs. Abbot is gone, as is Wacky Squirrel, and the parody characters will also be absent.

Nineteen eighty-eight's first issue, *Boris the Bear* #15, will show a typical day for Boris and friends. Boris helps Dave get off to school despite his protests, works on in the yard with Steve, is attacked by Rufus, gets revenge on Rufus and Margaret, and spends the end of the day as he typically does. How's that? Read it and find out.

Boris the Bear #16 is "adventure day," the one day every weekend on which Boris, Dave and Steve have an adventure. Guess who's turn it is to pick one? If you picked Boris, go directly to the scary woods, where you'll discover a mine shaft with some suspicious-looking bottles in it. At the same time the boys are underground, Butch and the Infernos are initiating three boys into their gang. If they can spend the night in the town's haunted house, they can join the gang. Meanwhile, Boris and the boys discover that the mine is a secret entrance to an old "Speakeasy," which just happens to be in the basement of the haunted house.

Spirited hijinks ensue, when both parties of boys think each other are ghosts. Then the real ghosts show up. Wait a second. Real ghosts?

A three-part story will begin in issue #17 (March). Guest appearances by famous spy movie actors will spice up this story involving terrorists, bearnappers, a family of moron crooks headed by "Mom," Dave-nappers, a new regular character named Whip Lash, Peter-nappers, ninjas, skateboarders, Communists, car chases, the fate of the free world, and the return of . . . the Punish-bear!

In #17, a terrorist group which kidnaps independent "rogue" scientists intends to steal Dave, to force Peter to reveal his robotic secrets to them. Headed by the evil Doctor Foo-Yung, the terrorists then plan to sell the secrets on the international market. Meanwhile, an ex-CIA agent named Whip Lash, who now works for a federal task force protecting these "rogue" scientists, shows up to protect Peter. "Whip Lash is sort of a cross between Sledge Hammer and Colonel Flagg from *M*A*S*H*," says Smith. "He loves his gun, and he suspects everyone is a commie, especially Boris. He's straight out of the '50s." And again meanwhile, a moronic gang plans to kidnap Boris to get a big ransom. Will Whip Lash show up in time? Does Dave get kidnapped? Does Boris get kidnapped? And how does Boris get wrecked?

The second part of the story (#18, if you're not counting), will find Dave escaping from his captors, Boris, Whip Lash, and the moron gang all attempting to free him from Foo-Yung, Dave's subsequent recapture, and the dramatic return of . . . The Punish-bear!

The story concludes in issue #19, in an all-out battle issue wherein the fate of the free world will be decided, as Punish-bear, Dave, Peter, Steve, Whip Lash, the moron gang, the skateboard kids, and the police fight against Foo-Yung, spies, ninjas, terrorists, and other bad guys! Worlds will live. Worlds will die . . . uh, whoops, that's another series. Sorry.

For the future, *Boris* will have some international travel stories (possibly to China), and even some interdimensional travel stories, in an elaborate multiple-issue storyline wherein Boris is transported into an anthropomorphic medieval society. "I plan to eventually do a *Pooky Special*, possibly a *Whip Lash Special*, and either a *Boris Annual* or *Graphic Novel* explaining the complete original of Boris, in much greater detail than that in *Boris #4*," says Smith. "These will not be done, though, until I have at least six months of publishing under my belt." A plan to move *Boris* to color after issue #24 will depend on sales.

Speaking of which, *Boris the Beor's Instant Color Classics* has been cancelled with #4, which should have appeared by December.

—AM—

Elect him now!

BOZO IN 3-D

Written by HAL LANE, illustrated by ANDY ICE, edited by JOHN STEPHENSON

2-issue limited series; 28 black-and-white pages, $2.50; bi-monthly from BLACKTHORNE COMICS

Bozo, Bozo, always laughs, never frowns . . . Our story continues . . . Bozo has a personality exchange with a reanimated dinosaur. What is the result? A 40-ton dinosaur with the brain of a clown and a clown with the brain of a dinosaur! What would you do? Why, run for president of course! Sending funds to the Contras is a Bozo no-no! George Bush, you've got a run for your money!

—MM—

THE BRAIN OF MISTER X

Written by DEAN MOTTER and BILL SIENKIEWICZ, illustrated by BILL SIENKIEWICZ, edited by DEAN MOTTER

32 full-color pages; $2.50; 3-issue mini-series monthly from VORTEX COMICS

This mini-series will be completely self-contained and is not part of the Mister X continuity in the same way that *Dork Knight* was not a part of the *Batman* continuity.

Vortex isn't letting much info out on *The Brain of Mister X*. All they would say is that we will find out who Mister X really is or who they really are. Also note that the story will rely heavily upon the right brain/left brain theory. So dig out those neurology texts, gang.

Oh, yes. One more thing. Should interest warrant, this series might be collected together as a graphic novel later.

—SW—

BULLWINKLE AND ROCKY

Written by DAVE MANAK, pencilled by ERNIE COLON, inked by AL MILGROM, edited by SID JACOBSON

32 four-color pages; $1.00; newsstand distribution; bi-monthly from MARVEL COMICS GROUP

President Reagan guest-stars in "The Presidential Race" in a race through the streets of Washington. Boris and Natasha tell their side of the story in "The Backyard Boys," and in "The Strange Olympics," Bullwinkle has to represent the United States in every event.

BULLWINKLE AND ROCKY 3-D

Written and edited by JOHN STEPHENSON, illustrated by JORGE PACHECO

32 3-D pages; $2.50; one-shot from BLACKTHORNE COMICS

Following the success of last year's *Bullwinkle and Rocky 3-D #1*, Blackthorne is issuing a second issue in April. The publisher's licensing agreement with Jay Ward Productions, creator and owner of the Bullwinkle properties, grants Blackthorne the rights to release one issue with the option to publish one more.

Bullwinkle and Rocky 3-D #2 will feature an original script, rather than an adaptation of an old television episode. According to editor/writer John Stephenson, the second issue features "Bullwinkle for President." (There seems to be a certain theme cropping up in these *Bullwinkle* titles; maybe it's the Communist villains that inspire the trend.) Stephenson adds that Blackthorne is hoping to correlate publishing rights between Jay Ward and Larry Harmon Productions to include the perennially popular Bozo the Clown in the issue as Bullwinkle's political opponent.

Bullwinkle vs. Bozo? That really doesn't sound any different from the 1984 Presidential election!

—ME—

CALIFORNIA GIRLS

Written, drawn and colored by TRINA ROBBINS, edited by CAT YRONWODE

32 black-and-white pages; $1.50; bi-monthly from ECLIPSE COMICS

Trina Robbins continues to make the world safe for paper dolls in *California*

The trials and tribulations of being a pair of **California Girls**

Girls although at a bi-monthly pace beginning with **#7**. "To save my sanity it had to go bi-monthly," Robbins explains. "It just piled up and piled up and piled up. Issue **#7** will get out in time, but it will still be a bit of a panic. But by **#8** I'll be all caught up."

Storylines will continue in a light-hearted vein, although Robbins has a few more serious stories in the works. "Issue **#8** has my 'save the dolphins' story, and further down the line is an apartheid story. But I can't preach all the time."

Robbins is enjoying the chance to allow her characters to grow at their own pace. "They develop their own personalities before I know what's happening," she explains, and promises more and more emphasis on character development.

California Girls has been optioned by a major animation studio, proving further that there's interest in fun, fashions and frolic "everywhere but in the little world of super-heroes."

—HM&D—

CALIFORNIA RAISINS IN 3-D

Written and illustrated by DAVID CODY WEISS, edited by JOHN STEPHENSON

32 3-D pages, $2.50, quarterly from BLACKTHORNE PUBLISHING

Adapted from the award-winning commercial by Claymation maestro Will Vinton, this one's just like the title says. It's the story of four of those toe-tapping former grapes, rais'in' hell (sorry) in California. In eye-popping 3-D, no less. There's two scoops in every issue. Next thing you know, they'll be doing a 3-D comic of the Noid.

—MM—

Jack Kirby foreshortening lives at Marvel!

CAPTAIN AMERICA

Written by MARK GRUENWALD, penciled by KIERON DWYER, inked by AL MILGROM, edited by RALPH MACCHIO

32 four-color pages, 75 cents, newsstand distribution, monthly from MARVEL COMICS GROUP

Issue **#341** will feature not one, not two, but *three* complete stories in one issue. The first of these stories will focus on Steve Rogers, now known simply as "The Captain," and his battle with Iron Man, stemming from **#340**'s Iron Man crossover. The second tale will show the new Cap in action, as he holds a press conference to announce the old Cap's retirement, and also the fact that Bucky has changed his name to Battle Star, and received a new costume as well. (There will now a pause for brief thunderous applause.) The press conference will be interrupted by the arrival of Leftwinger and Rightwinger, formerly the other two members of the Buckies (remember them?). The third and final story of the issue will focus on the Serpent Society, as they officially induct the four new serpent-villains from **#337** into the group. This will lead into a three-part story in **#342-344**, in which dat ol' femme fatale, Viper, will attempt to wrest control of the Serpents from Sidewinder. While some members of the group are loyal to Sidewinder, some of the others don't really care who leads the group, and a war of the Serpents will break out. Gruenwald also promised a horde of more new snake-villains will be introduced in this story, as he has "gone through every book on snakes," that he could find in order to "bleed the well dry" on interesting snake-names and powers.

Beginning with **#343**, the new Cap will face his own problems with a group called the Resistors, a band of underground mutants protesting the recently adopted Mutants Registration Act. The Resistors will be liberating mutants in a very militant manner, and the new Cap, of course, will be fighting them. Gruenwald says there will eventually be familiar faces in the Resistors, but he doesn't want to step on any toes in the Chris Claremont-Louise Simonson camp. The Resistors story will conclude in **#345**, following which the Watchdogs will return. Also, at some point during this time, new Cap John Walker will confront a situation that will force him to "change his outlook" on the government he so blindly serves. Whether this change will drive him away from or closer to the government, however, Gruenwald refused to say.

Battle Star: Oh, well, beggars can't be choosers.

—DP—

CAPTAIN ATOM

Written and co-plotted by CARY BATES, co-plotted by GREG WEISMAN, penciled by PAT BRODERICK, inked by BOB SMITH, edited by DENNIS O'NEIL

32 four-color pages, 75 cents, newsstand distribution, monthly from DC COMICS INC.

Major Force, the villain recently introduced in the pages of *Captain Atom Annual #1*, will continue to plague the hero during the first part of 1988.

The experiment which turned Nathaniel Adam into a silver-skinned superhero was also performed on a death-row inmate, with unfortunate results. That test created the evil Major Force, a powerful foe for Captain Atom. Force is devoid of scruples and downright nasty.

Captain Atom will also sever his ties with the United States Air Force, therefore becoming a free agent. The military naturally frowns upon his actions, and Captain Atom begins a struggle with life in the "real" world. Editor Denny O'Neil notes that Adam's life is complicated by the fact that "he has been an Air Force officer throughout his adulthood. He is also missing 20 years from his life—any civilian skills he might have had are now very much outdated!"

Nightshade, a member of the Suicide Squad and a former teammate of Captain Atom in the now-invalid Charlton Comics continuity, will guest-star in **#14** but she *may* not be Cap's ally in the DC Universe!

This newly-freelance Captain Atom will find himself growing more firmly engrained into the world of super-heroics, a world he initially resisted. His affiliation with the Justice League International will remain intact.

Cary Bates will continue to develop the themes and character sub-plots that he started in the book's first year," says O'Neil, who is also pleased over the favorable response that *Captain Atom* has received. "It's a pleasant surprise to see that some new changes can be added to what is basically a straight super-hero."

—MF—

CAPTAIN CONFEDERACY

Written by WILL SHETTERLY (in collaboration on #9-11 with JOHN M. FORD), illustrated by VINCE STONE, edited by EMMA BULL

32 black-and-white pages, $1.50, bi-monthly from STEELDRAGON PRESS

The comic book which was described by Dwight Decker in *Amazing Heroes* #126 as having "the best letter column in the business" will increase its frequency from quarterly to bi-monthly in 1988. This may just bring the end sooner, since Will Shetterly hasn't decided yet whether to continue *Captain Confederacy* after the present adventure concludes in issue **#12**. Also, John M. Ford, who won the World Fantasy Award in 1984 for his novel, *The Dragon Waiting*, will assist with the writing of issues **#9** through **#11**. Ford has plotted those three issues and will write the actual script for **#10**, while Shetterly will script **#9** and **#11** and will edit Ford's script for **#10**.

Will Shetterly says, "**#9** sets up the plan to take hostage the President of the CSA during her State of the Confederacy speech. It also includes Cassius, a black leader of the Underground whose plans do not coincide with Jeremy Gray's, and it features Jeremy and Kate's attempt to reach Roxanne in order to find out what the Ultimate Potential serum is doing to her. **#10** is an interesting digression from the main story, it reveals more about the history of the CSA while a new character tracks Dr. Brikola, who is attempting to escape from the Confederacy. **#11** is the grand culmination of the previous 10 issues. Jeremy Gray takes up the role of Captain Confederacy for what he hopes will be the final time. At least one major character dies in this issue. Noble things are said and foul things are done, and for people who like abrupt endings, this could be considered the conclusion to *Captain Confederacy*, the novel. But because I like more leisurely and less enigmatic conclusions, I'll plot and write the twelfth issue to wrap up the threads I think are important. I have yet to decide whether that issue will end in a way that'll let the series continue, though I do have ideas for things I'd like to do if enough of the cast survive."

Captain Confederacy's two back-up features, Matt Feazell's "Ant Boy" and Stu Shiffman's "Sax and Violets," will continue for as long as the comic lasts, as far as Shetterly knows. At least, Feazell and Shiffman have standing invitations to keep them going. "Ant Boy" is a parody of super-heroes, featuring a human boy who was raised by ants. Feazell's stories are episodic; he could continue them indefinitely. Shiffman's comedic adventures are sent in a skewed extension of Captain Confederacy's world, depicting New York City and the rest of the planet. (There is no real continuity between Shetterly's and Shiffman's views of this "alternate-history Earth.") Shiffman is considering wrapping up his current adventure in one or two more issues, although Shetterly has suggested that he stretch it out a bit longer.

—PD—

CAPTAIN THUNDER AND BLUE BOLT

Written by ROY & DANN THOMAS, illustrated by E.R. CRUZ, edited by DENNIS MALLONEE

A cover rough for **Captain Confederacy #9**

32 four-color pages, $1.95, newsstand distribution, monthly from HERO COMICS

Issue #6 should be the first issue of ***Captain Thunder and Blue Bolt*** out in 1988, and writers Roy & Dann Thomas promise a lot will be occurring this year. Captain Thunder and his son Blue Bolt continue rooting out members of the "Merchants of Menace," who are bidding under the cover of the philanthropic organization the "Merchants of Mercy." Only members of this group can clear Captain Thunder of the murder charge which hangs over his head from several years ago. This also serves as a training exercise for Blue Bolt who has only recently acquired his powers.

Father and son return to Holland and meet up with Blue Bolt's mother who despises Captain Thunder, and a tug of war ensues for the Boy's affections. One of the "Merchants," Krakatoa, Beast of Java, who spouts the power of a living volcano, also crosses their paths in #7.

In #8 and #9, a new super-powered group emerges called "King's Gambit" and we are not quite sure if they are good guys or the bad guys. All of the members have a chess theme attached to them and their powers. This is a concept Thomas has been carrying around for years, and if their first appearance is successful enough, they may wind up with their own Hero comic this summer.

Issue #10 will feature the first Hero Comics crossover story. Sparkplug (from the ***Champions*** comic book) will meet Blue Bolt. She's young, blonde, electrical, and very female; Blue Bolt is young, blond, electrical, and male. When they get together, the sparks are going to fly.

Also, as of issue #6, E.R. Cruz becomes the permanent artist on the book.

—ES—

CARE BEARS

Written by MICHAEL GALLAGHER, pencilled by HOWARD POST, inked by ROBERTA EDELMAN, edited by SID JACOBSON

32 four-color pages, $1.00, newsstand distribution, bi-monthly from MARVEL COMICS GROUP

Each issue will feature more short stories starring the Care Bears, including more solo stories starring individual Care Bears and their relatives, the Care Bear Cousins.

CASES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES

Written by SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE, illustration and editorial co-ordination by DAN DAY

32 black-and-white pages, $2.00, bi-monthly from RENEGADE PRESS

Cases of Sherlock Holmes enters its third year of publication with the distinction of being the longest running ongoing Sherlock Holmes comic book. Illustrator Dan Day says he will continue to present complete and unabridged Doyle stories in an upper-and-lower case typeset format, and to draw the book in a complementary turn-of-the-century style that works well in the black-and-white format.

Issue #11 (January 1988) relates "The Adventure of the Black Peter." Scotland Yard is stumped when a sea captain named "Black Peter" is found harpooned to the wall of his ship. Thus enters the famous Sherlock Holmes.

#12 (March 1988) tells "The Adventure of Silver Blaze." The owners of the race horse Silver Blaze ask Holmes to investigate when the stable boy is drugged, the trainer is found dead, and the valuable horse disappears.

Issues #13 and #14 (May/July 1988) present a two-part story, "The Adventure of the Naval Treaty." The British Empire herself is at peril when a copy of an important treaty with a foreign power goes missing. Can Holmes find it in time?

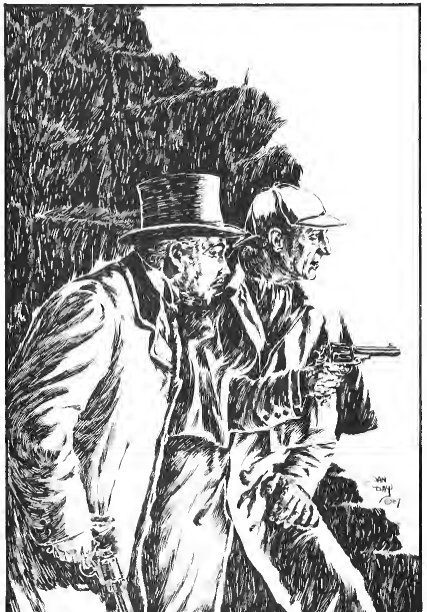
Issue #15 (August 1988) is about "The Adventure of Charles Augustus Milverton." Milverton, a blackmailer, is murdered ... and Holmes and Watson become implicated when they break into Milverton's home to retrieve the blackmail papers. This issue will feature a different layout style; the illustrations will be of equal size, in regular panel positions throughout the book.

Dan Day advises that the painted covers will cease with issue #12, due to brother David's commitments to other projects. Day says that he has not decided whether the covers will be inked and colored with dyes, or colored via straight process, but either way the covers will continue to be drawn by him and reproduced in full color.

Some ***Cases*** readers have speculated that Sherlock Holmes may be gay. Dan Day says this is definitely not so: he assures that Holmes has all of his clothes on under his smoking jacket when he appears in the same room with Watson. No stories providing details on the detective's love life are planned to appear in the near future.

—JH—

A Cases of Sherlock Holmes pin-up by Dan Day.



CENTRIFUGAL BUMBLE-PUPPY

Written and illustrated by VARIOUS, edited by JOE SACCO

32 black-and-white pages, magazine size, mature readers, $2.50, monthly from FANTAGRAPHICS BOOKS (Mature Readers)

With several issues under his belt, editor Sacco professes a satisfaction with the way ***Centrifugal Bumble-Puppy*** is progressing. He will rely on a stable of artists, "... generally a lot of the people who've been seen already. I have about 30 artists to use," while keeping his eyes open for selected new talent. "I do try to emphasize the newcomers, because they seldom have a chance to break in." That means more work by J.R. ("Growing Up Weird") Williams, Steve (***Dog Boy***) Lafler, Michael Dougan, Jerzy H. Szoztek, and Jim Siergey, among others—leavened by contributions from small pressers like Wayne Honath and T.K. Atherton, and by worthy contributions slid through the transom.

The subject matter of future issues should remain familiar to those who've been following the magazine. "I'm going to concentrate on social satire. It'd be nice to have some political humor, but that's hard to get. Most cartoonists aren't that interested, it seems, in the political end of things." Sacco will be using an occasional illustrated text piece, like two upcoming articles by Edward Shannon examining American values.

About the "mature readers" label, he says, "If the magazine isn't mature, then that's my fault. I'm not interested in gratuitous sex, but I'll not shy away from mature themes."

—EV—

Jim Woodring's cover for an upcoming issue of Centrifugal Bumble-Puppy.

CEREBUS THE AARDVARK

Written and drawn by DAVE SIM, backgrounds by GERHARD

24 black-and-white pages, $1.70, monthly from AARDVARK-VANAHEIM

Cunning. Convoluted. Downright contrary. Yes, it's time yet again to enter the world of Dave Sim and Cerebus. And yet it's either feast or famine. The Final Ascension winds up *Church and State*, and this whole megillah of a storyline—begun lo these many years ago—actually *ends* in #111 ("In time for Superman's 50th anniversary," Sim deadpans). And what surprises await us as Dave 'n' Ger embark on a new storyline? Well, if I told you, they wouldn't be surprises, would they now?

So let us leave it at that, as ***Cerebus*** continues its exploration of the immutable cosmic law of cause and effect. Dave, caught collaborating at the home of a fellow cartoonist and raconteur of the vegetative, did answer a few questions of general interest, however. Like the reaction to the infamous rape scene. He claims that he wasn't caught unawares by the hullabaloo that ensued.

"I knew it would happen but it never really occurred to me until I was almost at that point, and I thought, they're going to look at this out of context, like it was complete revelation. It was pretty self-evident. If I wasn't so bogged down in the notion of producing a novel of great mass, it would have occurred to me that this is going to be seen as an individual issue, and that was pretty much what provoked the decision to go bi-weekly. The only way to shut them up was to give them another one right away.

"The scene is a lynchpin story with great application in the final book. But once it occurred to me that the final book wasn't going to be arriving until a good year after the rape scene, there was no way that people would see it any other way. They're trained to look at it as an individual comic book. [Or else I could] splash notations all over the book that it does have application later on, which I'm loath to do just because that's sort of pandering to the consumer. It was an interesting situation. It was there all along. I knew what it was leading up to, aside from the events in #99 and #100. If they had come out right on the heels of the rape scene, they would have diminished it a great deal, made it seem almost inconsequential compared to what the next cycle is.

"The people who understand what I'm doing, or who are sympathetic to what I'm doing took it for granted that it made a great deal of sense, and the people who really hadn't been reading the book, like Don Thompson, took it out of context."

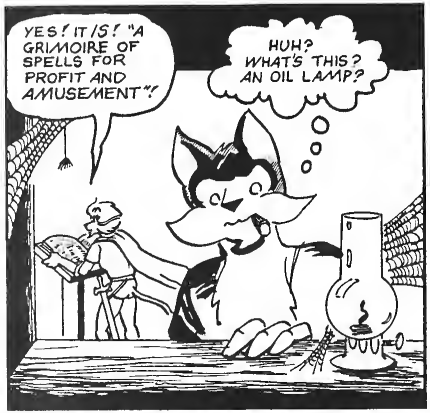
And what about that cannon ball? Will the introduction of gunpowder change life in Iest forever? "Not really. The military application never really comes into it. It's sort of a magnificent display, very much the way Weishaupt showed it to Cerebus. Look at this, neat-oh, hey?"

Aha, so it's just a big metaphor for the atomic bomb. "In a way, yeah."

And so we leave the creator for this semi-annual period, as he ponders the ennui of picking up airheaded women and the enduring appeal of the creative act. "I've had a longer relationship with Cerebus than with anyone in my life," he muses. "I don't necessarily like him and a lot of times I *really* don't like him, and I'm certainly looking forward to getting rid of him in 16 years. But there's no question but that the relationship between Dave Sim and Cerebus is an authentic relationship."

—HMacD—

THE CHAMPION OF KATARA



The Chempion of Ketara: Plotted many issues in edvence.

Written and illustrated by CHUCK MELVILLE

32 black-and-white pages $1.50 bi-monthly from CRACK O DAWN COMICS

The first issue of this funny-animal sword-and-sorcery title was listed as bi-monthly. However, it appeared last summer, just in time to get caught in 1987's black-and-white comics disaster. Chuck Melville has doggedly continued to write and draw the issues on schedule—it is written through **#6** and drawn through **#4**—but issue **#1** has only now brought in enough money to finance the printing of **#2**, which should be out in early 1988. The actual publication of future issues is iffy.

The Champion of Katara is light-hearted in spirit ("the idea, in fact, is to walk a fine line between tense drama and outright silliness..."), but Melville has worked out an elaborate history for his world. "Katara exists in a parallel dimension. It is a medieval country inhabited by cats, surrounded by countries occupied by other animals, (i.e., Dogonia, Bruinsland, Ra'Kuna, etc.). For thousands of years the cats, and their neighbors, have struggled against the evil of the Lord of Shadows, who holds reign over the northernmost lands. At different points in their history, a Champion would be chosen by the representatives of the Powers of Light. This poor soul would be awarded possession of the Sword of Crystal, in the hopes that he would deliver the free folk from being totally dominated by the Great Evil.

"It has been a few hundred years since the last such confrontation, and now the mages of the free lands have become aware of new stirrings from the north. A new Champion is needed.

"It is at this point that our hero, Lee (Leon Crooktail), enters.

"Lee (a lion), and his cousin, Captain Nightwalker (a cat), are traveling to Wilkes-Barre, PA in the midst of a terrible storm, when a blinding flash transports them through the dimensions to Katara. Once there, Lee finds the Sword of Crystal hidden within a cavern. A mysterious representative of the great powers that be informs him that he is to be the new Champion ordained to beat back the evil Lord of Shadows, and deliver the free folk from all harm. The sword, it is explained, is a focal point for the great mystical forces at work in the land, and only one particular individual may carry it... and this time the chosen one is Lee.

"But there is a catch to all this. Lee is an avowed pacifist, who refuses to participate in any form of violence.

"Oh, well... it's too late to get anyone else, anyway. And so it is that Lee becomes an unwilling hero and symbol to the folk of Katara as he attempts desperately to return home through the dimensions again to Pennsylvania.

"***Champ* #2** (soon to be published) begins a three-part story called 'Dum-Dums and Dragons.' Lee and Nightwalker head for the royal palace of Catalon to search for a way home, but Nightwalker, seeking a little excitement, diverts their course to a village being terrorized by a dragon. Lee is quite charmed by the friendliness of the village people, until he discovers that they expect him to kill the dragon!

"***Champ* #3**: 'The Light That Flailed!' After realizing that he can't just walk away from the desperate village, Lee agrees to put an end to the menace of the dragon. But any hopes that he has of simply capturing it for some zoo are dashed by two occurrences: Nightwalker's discovery of the Dragon's hoard, and the revelations of the Dragon's terrible secret.

"***Champ* #4**: 'Curse of the Dragon Lady.' Lee discovers that not only can he *not* kill the dragon, but he must also save its life from an angry mob, and a genuine dragonslayer... or else an innocent life will be destroyed!

"***Champ* #5**: 'The Road to Catalon.' Lee and Nightwalker continue on to Catalon. Up until this point, Lee has forgotten the circumstances under which he had the magic Sword forced upon him. (This was due to traumatic amnesia, resulting from a car crash in the first issue.) But now the memories return, and Lee is presented with an opportunity to return the Sword, and allow its responsibilities to pass him by. But will he be willing to do so at the expense of the peoples of Katara?

"***Champ* #6**: 'The Trouble with Hairy!' Lee and Nightwalker finally arrive in Catalon where they promptly run into Hairy Harry, a kleptomaniac fox. Before long, all three are thrown into prison for thievery, and soon paroled into the Kataran army. All except Lee, who initially refuses to enlist, preferring to rot in prison than to compromise his pacifist beliefs. But unexpected circumstances force him into a surprising decision.

"Long range plans for the book are to continue to introduce new supporting characters, as Lee finds his place in the Kataran army, everyone searches for a misplaced wizard, members of the royal family plot against one another, Nightwalker plays poker, and the country of Katara finds itself drawn further into a war that it doesn't want.

"In addition to the main stories, each issue will also feature an extra eight-page story: 'Tales of Katara.' These will explore the history of Katara and the events that lead to those occurring in the present timeline. The stories in issues **#2** through **#6** in particular will tell of the creation of the animal races. Their schedule is as follows:

"**#2**: The creation of the world, and the evolution of the animals into a humanoid form.

"**#3**: The torment of the animals by the Lord of Shadows, and of the erection of the first great ancient city.

"**#4**: The creation of the Gargoyle race.

"**#5**: The erection of the second great ancient city, and the creation of the Sword of Crystal.

"**#6**: The destruction of the ancient cities, the scattering of the animal races, and the making of a vow that sets events into motion, leading to the present storyline in the main feature.

"The 'Tales' will be a bit more dramatic in content than ***Champion*** is, although a bit of the silliness remains.

Melville is clearly putting a lot of effort into ***The Champion of Katara*** (The back up story is being inked by Ed Oldfield.) It remains to be seen whether the economics of the black-and-white comics industry will allow this sort to be printed. —FP—

CHAMPIONS

Written by DENNIS MALLONEE, pencilled by CHRIS MARINNAN and DELL BARRAS, edited by DENNIS MALLONEE

32 four-color pages $1.95; newsstand distribution; monthly from HERO COMICS

Issues **#6** and **7** put the Champions against the renewed threat of Mechanon, the robotic menace who was (in a story yet to be told) originally responsible for the formation of the team. Also in **#6**, Flare's sister Olga gets a new costume and a super-hero name of her own: Sparkplug. And look for two *new* Champions to join the team at the end of **#7**.

Issue **#8** is a special all-Foxbat issue featuring the awesome origin of Foxbat and the sordid details of his initial encounter with Flare. If readers have ever wondered why Flare hates Foxbat with such a passion, this story will tell them why.

In the aftermath of the Mechanon story, in **#9**, Rose resigns from the team, unaware that Dark Malice is about to put a plan into motion that will, if successful, destroy the Champions forever. This begins an extended storyline that will last through the summer, and thrust the Champions headlong into a mythological setting.

CHECKMATE

Created by JOHN BYRNE, PAUL KUPPERBERG and STEVE ERWIN; written by PAUL KUPPERBERG; pencilled by STEVE ERWIN; inked by AL VEY; edited by JONATHAN PETERSON

32 four-color pages, $1.25; direct sales only; New Format; monthly from DC COMICS INC.

After appearing with Superman in ***Action Comics* #598**, Checkmate, DC's new team of high-tech top-secret super-heroes, will debut in their own monthly New Format series at the beginning of 1988.

"Checkmate is a covert government operation that functions within its own set of rules," explains editor Jonathan Peterson. "When the C.I.A., F.B.I., or Justice Department has failed and there seems to be no other way to solve a problem, then Checkmate comes into play."

The organization is established by the Suicide Squad's government liaison Amanda Waller, who appears in a cameo in ***Checkmate* #1**. Although Waller forms the team, she will not be featured regularly in the series. Harry Stein, familiar to readers of ***Vigilante***, will coordinate the group's activities, but the book will basically focus itself on the field members of Checkmate. Referred to as Knights, these costumed super-agents are all new additions to the DC Universe.

Checkmate's team operative strategy will resemble that of a game of chess, hence the group's name.

In ***Checkmate* #1-3**, each of the members of the organization is introduced, and readers learn the function of the Knights and the capabilities of their battle suits. By issue three, the players will all be in position and the action will erupt as Checkmate tackles "The America Supremacist Party," a legion of twisted white supremacists headquartered in Chicago. This party is responsible for some treacherous terrorist acts.

In issues **#4** and beyond, the organization will expand itself to an international scope, "going worldwide at a moment's notice," says Peterson.

Peterson concludes that DC Senior Editor Mike Gold recently mentioned that ***Checkmate*** exists in an "*L.A. Law/Hill Street Blues* stream of consciousness," as statements and nuances which seem insignificant when they actually occur, will return and be played upon in future issues. Back-up stories introducing characters and concepts crucial to the thrust of the series may also be incorporated.

But doesn't the covert Checkmate team sound similar to the Suicide Squad in function? "The difference between the two is a case of the end justifying the means," Peterson believes. "The Suicide Squad still operates within the boundaries of traditional super-hero ethics. Checkmate uses a high quota of action and violence. They'll do things that will raise eyebrows... people will say 'I can't believe they got away with that'."

The editor also likens the members of Checkmate to "Old West gunslingers riding into town to wipe out the problem."

A promotional poster advertising ***Checkmate*** will appear in comics outlets in early '88, with art by the book's regulars Steve Erwin and Al Vey. —MF—

The pencilled version of the splash page to ***Champions #9***

CHILDREN OF FIRE

Written, illustrated, and edited by RICHARD CORBEN

3 issue mini-series; 32 full-color pages; $2.00; bi-monthly from FANTAGOR PRESS

This title was originally planned as an off-shoot of Corben's ***Neverwhere***, but, according to Corben, "has taken on its own identity." ***Children Of Fire*** is described as a fantasy/action/adventure that leans more towards science fiction than Corben's other works. It involves visitors from space landing on a small island on a parallel world. The aliens encounter Zeg, the hermit, and his bodyguard/servant Zomuk. Each issue of ***Children Of Fire*** contains a 13 page lead chapter, and several back-up stories. "I realize that 13 pages of lead material might seem a bit slim," said Corben. "But I'm doing the writing, penciling, inking, coloring, and photo engraving myself. It's a very time consuming process." While Corben has committed

himself to three issues, he hopes to take the series much farther in the not-too-distant future. Look for #2 in mid-January, #3 in March. —JW—

THE CHOSEN

Written by STEVE ENGLEHART, pencilled by JOE STATON, inked by MARK FARMER, edited by ANDY HELFER (Mature Readers)

32 four-color pages; $1.25. 12-issue maxi-series, newsstand distribution; monthly from DC COMICS, INC.

Spinning out of the pages of the hugely successful ***Millennium, The Chosen*** is a book about those few people from Earth who were chosen to be the forebearers of the new age, and the next step in man's evolution. Eight of the Chosen have survived the Millennium, and have been granted various powers by the Guardians of the Universe. These eight are joined by a few already existing heroes, to become the new super-team called ***The Chosen***. The Chosen are:

Xiang Po, whose code-name is Gloss. Xiang draws strength from the Earth, as in an ancient Oriental belief in Feng Shui (the dragon lines of power which run beneath the Earth). She has the suppleness and strength of a dragon.

Betty Clawman becomes one with the Earth, as a sort of Mother Earth. She speaks and manifests herself through Gregorio.

Gregorio De La Vega is now Extrano, a word meaning "strange." Gregorio is now a witch who is in tune with Betty, and thus is aware of what goes on in the whole world. He wields your basic magical powers.

Takeo Yakata is now R.A.M. (Random Access Memory). He is in effect a living computer who draws his intelligence and energy through the elements of the Earth. He can access all electronic memories on the planet, and is very strong.

Celia Windward becomes Jet, a woman who can make use of the energy fields surrounding the Earth, such as electromagnetism, sound, heat, and light waves.

The Floronic Man is cured by the Guardians, though not completely. He will still have control over plants, and ties to "the green," yet the Guardians have allowed him to see all the other colors in the spectrum besides "the green." "He's still pretty weird, and be occasionally calls the humans meat, but other than that, he's a pretty normal plant-man."

Harbinger will also join with the Chosen, having avenged herself against the Manhunters on their homeworld. The young alien Green Lantern Arissa may also join the team.

Tom Kalmaku is not a part of the group yet. "He is a key," says Englehart. "Even though he refused to go ahead with the Guardians' plans, they gave him his power anyhow. Should he ever decide to embrace it, he only has to ask for it within himself, and he will get it. They think he will probably do so, because he is now the weak link of the Chosen." Tom will be one of the major players of the maxi-series, though.

Although Nikolai Lutkov and Salima Baramizar are dead, they are not yet passed over, and still reside in the area between death and the afterlife that strange spirit world wherein Deadman and the Phantom Stranger reside. "I don't think we've seen the last of them just yet," admits Englehart.

Having quit the group in issue #6 of ***Millennium***, Jan-Willem Kroef, the premier of South Africa, now decides that since he cannot deal with the cosmic consciousness, he must destroy it. He returns to South Africa, and mounts an effort to destroy the Chosen. "He is going to be our major villain," says Englehart, "our Doctor Doom, if you will. Unfortunately, he's the head of a real place: South Africa."

"The basic storyline of the book will show the first year of the group's existence on the planet. Having been given responsibility of the planet from the Green Lantern Corps (as current plans for the ending to the ***Green Lantern Corps*** series calls for), they are now working on helping the human race begin its evolution. Obviously, all they have to do is have babies to bring new amazing people to life, but I've already had babies in a 12-issue series, so I'm not doing it again," laughs Englehart.

"My original ending for ***Millennium*** had the Chosen that were left kind of blending off into the crowd, to live their lives somewhat normally. Fairly early on, DC pressured me to join them all together into one big cosmic being, but I didn't like that idea very much, either. Since the Guardians have always upheld the 'heroic ideal,' they let the Chosen know that if they want to survive, they have to take on super-powers to protect themselves. With the ending of the ***Green Lantern Corps***, a lot of my plans for interactions between the teams have been changed, and now, it seems as if the Chosen are the Earth's logical successor to the Green Lanterns."

Future descendants of the Chosen may eventually show up in the ***Legion of Super-Heroes***, and it was actually decided that Booster Gold was probably one of their descendants. "When ***Booster Gold*** got cancelled, though, it seemed kind of superfluous to throw that into ***Millennium***, so we didn't. It may show up in this series or ***Justice League International***, though."

Englehart wanted to do ***The Chosen*** as a new format book, so that he would not be under the Comics Code. "Although I didn't have any problems in doing ***Millennium***, there are still many things, politically and otherwise, that I would like to do. I'm not out to corrupt the youth of America, and I'm not out to get us banned anywhere, but by getting away from the Code altogether, I can do some heavier stuff. I have some ideas that are not standard comic book fare, which I think will work out fantastically. And I don't mean that in a sexual manner," Englehart says, bringing up Gregorio.

The world's first openly gay superhero is the Peruvian Gregorio, in a risky move on everyone's part involved. Reaction has not been disfavorable, though, surprising those at DC who were braced for the worst. "There hasn't been much adverse reaction at all," says Englehart. "People did tend to refer to ***Millennium*** as the book with the gay guy in it, but very few people have been negative about it." Englehart does admit that there is another gay person among the Chosen—a person whose personal life may never be revealed. "I did Gregorio as a flamboyant gay man, but he is that way because that is him, not because he is gay. The other gay character is much more reserved, and readers may never suspect their identity."

Englehart is toying with the idea that the Chosen would destroy the political structure of South Africa. "I want to explore the possibilities of these normal people with super-powers. I don't know if DC would let me do that, or even if the idea is workable. I don't want to get away from the Code just to charge more for the book. I want to get away from the Code so I can do something more powerful."

The Chosen will premiere in Mid-Spring. —AM—

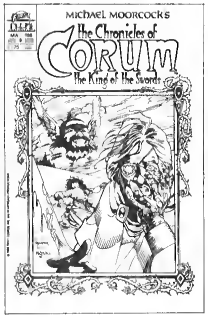
CHRONICLES OF CORUM

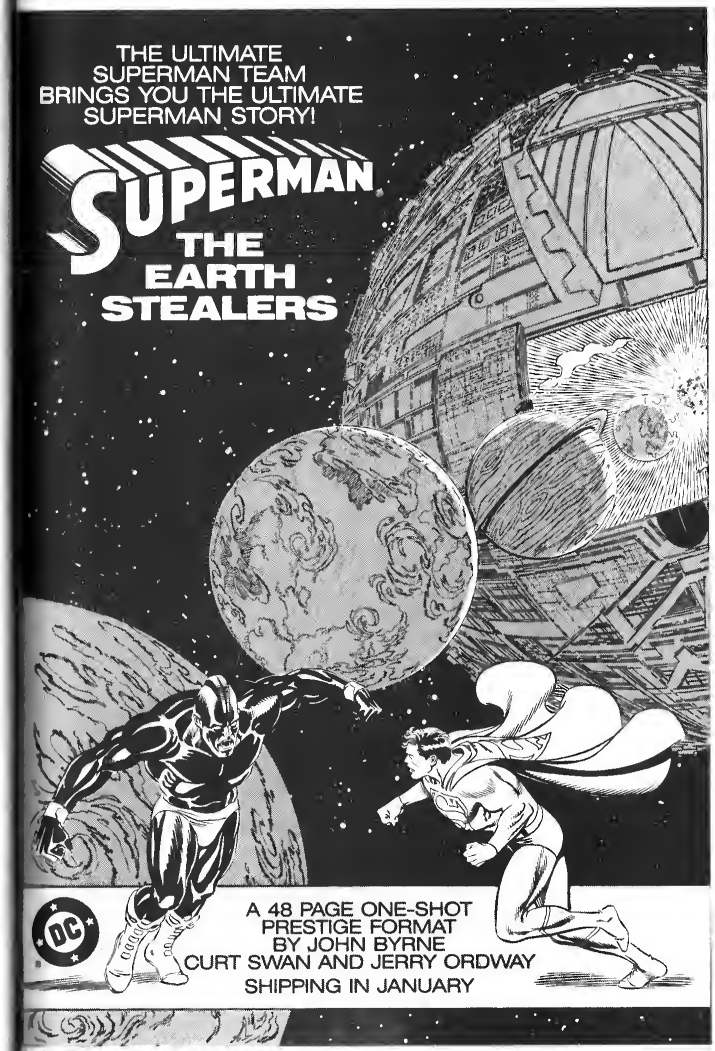
Adapted from MICHAEL MOORCOCK's novels by MARK SHANBLUM, pencilled by KEN HOOPER, inked by KELLY JONES, edited by LAUREL FITCH

32 full-color pages; $1.75; bi-monthly from FIRST COMICS

It's just one damn thing after another. First they say, "Knock off the Knight of the Swords." O.K., fine, sounds reason-

The cover to ***Corum*** *#9*





DC Comics Inc. © 1987

Be a HERO™ COMICS Subscriber!

Become a ***Hero Comics*** subscriber, and have every issue of your favorite Hero Comics titles delivered directly to your door.

Enjoy the finest in *science-fiction* adventure with **Eternity Smith!**

Enjoy *superhero team* action with **Champions!**

Watch the most dynamic *father-and-son* combination in the world of comics today in the pages of **Captain Thunder and Blue Bolt!**

And pit *science* vs *sorcery* with the Marksman and Rose, in the pages of **The Marksman!**

A subscription to any Hero Comics title costs you only $18.00 for twelve monthly issues. That's a savings of nearly 25% off the cover price.

And you can save even more if you subscribe to all four titles!

Simply fill out the coupon below, and send it with your check or money order (don't send cash) in the appropriate amount to:

HERO COMICS
6433 California Ave
Long Beach CA 90805

I want to subscribe to the following Hero Comics titles:
☐ Eternity Smith ☐ Champions
☐ Captain Thunder ☐ The Marksman
I enclose $18.00 for each title, or
☐ I enclose only $60.00 for all four titles.
Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State ____ Zip: _____

FOR SERIOUS COMICS COLLECTORS ONLY!

A LIFETIME SUBSCRIPTION OFFER!

Send us $1500 now, and we'll send you ***Hero Comics*** for the rest of your life.

No matter how many titles each month, no matter what the cover price or format, you'll receive a copy of *everything* we publish.

If you're interested in more information, drop a note to:
Hero Comics
Lifetime Subscriptions
6433 California Avenue
Long Beach CA 90805

Cinder and Ashe heralds the return of Jose Luis Garcia Lopez to a regular series (even if it only is four issues).

able. So you go through all kinds of hell, but you do it, hurray, hurrah, happy ending, time to ride off into the sunset. But no. "We didn't tell you about the Queen of Swords?" they say. "I mean, without getting rid of the Queen of Swords the whole thing's a waste of time. Might as well have stayed home." What can you do? You've come this far, so you might as well go after the Queen of the Swords. And, by God, you do her in too. But suddenly, you notice they have sheepish looks on their faces. "Don't tell me," you say. "Fraid so," they say. "The King of the Swords this time, right?" "You're a smart one. Didn't I always say he was a smart one?" The others agree. "You know," you say, "if I live through this, and I come back, and you tell me I've gotta destroy the Emperor of the Swords, or the Prime Minister of the Swords, or the Chancellor of the Exchequer of the Swords, I'm going to kick somebody's ass around here." They say, "You can't say 'ass' in a comic book, you have to say 'butt'." "F-k you!" you say, thus losing your Code approval.

Well, maybe it's not quite like that. Anyway, the "you" in this case is Corum Jhaelen Irsei, last champion of the Vadhagh and the Nhadragh, who had so much trouble in Ragha da Kheta, Lywman Esh, and Halwyg nan Vake. Of course, all this took place during the Great Age of Throat-Clearing. In January, issue #9 begins the adaptation of *The King of the Swords*. This adventure will include a visit to the Vanishing Tower, just back from its smash-hit disappearance in *Elric*. Then Corum must go to seek his destiny (for this trilogy, anyway) in the City of Tanelorn. The funny thing about these Michael Moorcock series is, in some of them, if you find Tanelorn, you win; while in others, finding Tanelorn is no big deal. This can cause quite a bit of hard feelings at the Eternal Champions Picnic. "So, uh, found Tanelorn yet?" says Erekose. "Oh, I've found it, all right. Can't walk ten bleeding paces without running into bleeding Tanelorn," says Elric. "*Lucky bastard!*" "You wouldn't like it. Ain't half dull." The day's never quite the same afterwards.

—RF—

CINDER AND ASHE

Written by GERRY CONWAY, illustrated by JOSE LUIS GARCIA-LOPEZ, edited by PAT BASTIENNE

4-issue limited series, 32 four-color pages, $1.50, monthly from DC COMICS INC. (Mature Readers)

Cinder & Ashe is described by editor Pat Bastienne as being in the same tone as the old *Avengers* TV series. (No, all of you newcomers, there was not a show about the super-hero team that you missed. This one, you had to be there.) The story concerns Jacob Ashe, who served in Vietnam. While there, he met a little girl who was the daughter of another serviceman and a Vietnamese woman who goes by the name of Cinder. Years later she appears in New Orleans where he now lives, and the pair go out and right wrongs. Bastienne describes them as more of a mercenary team as opposed to do-gooders. The villain of the piece is someone who both knew in Vietnam. The story is told on two levels: modern day and flashback to Vietnam. Ashe becomes a kind of adoptive father to Cinder because he knew her mother. The crimes they become involved with are interrelated to what happened in Vietnam.

The book carries a "Mature Readers" tag, and is by the capable team of Gerry Conway and Jose Luis Garcia-Lopez. The first issue should be out about the same time as this *Preview Special*.

—KS—

CLASSIC X-MEN

Written by CHRIS CLAREMONT, penciled by JOHN BYRNE, JOHN BOLTON, and KIERON DWYER, inked by TERRY AUSTIN and JOHN BOLTON, edited by ANN NOCENTI

32 four-color pages, $1.00, newsstand distribution, monthly from DC COMICS, INC.

By the time 1988 kicks off, ***Classic X-Men*** will have really started to move into classic mode as the Claremont Byrne team hots up. '87 ends with the epic battle against Magneto, which leads to the X-Men being split up. For those of you who were not around the first time, the story goes like this:

Ex-X-Men the Beast and Jean Grey, Phoenix, believe Cyclops, Storm, Wolverine, Colossus and Nightcrawler to be dead... and vice-versa (in fact, Cyclops et al. have unexpectedly found themselves in Ka-Zar's hidden Savage Land). The Beast and Jean Grey make their way to Prof. Xavier to reveal the grim news to the "deaths." The monumental confusion provides story impetus for several issues that follow as the two sets of characters painfully readjust to the sharp change in their lives and get on with them. Most particularly, Prof. Xavier takes off for new pastures, and Cyclops tries to come to terms with the realization that his grief for his beloved Jean is inexplicably muted.

In the Savage Land itself, the X-Men face the threat of the Petrified Man and his followers. This is my cue to tell you that new material worked into the main story will explain what becomes of those followers after their leader is vanquished by the mutants. Also, the scene wherein Wolverine kills a guard will be represented to make the hero's act more understandable. This is my second cue to tell you, as per editor Ann Nocenti's reminder, ***Classic X-Men*** exists not only to delight with tales of yore, but also to

clear up glitches in the continuity of the *X-Men*.

Following the Savage Land issues, the X-Men go to Japan to face off against a Power Man villain whose name escapes me, and Prof. Xavier is featured in a solo story highlighting a time before he formed the original X-Men. In that story the Prof. has his pocket picked by future X-Man Storm, who is a child and an orphan in Egypt.

Mention must be made of the John Bolton drawn back-ups, which serve to enhance the title and highlight previously unknown aspects of the X-Men's cast. Look for an incident that pushes Magneto toward his mutant supremacy theory, and a story wherein Storm learns her revered Nature has its cruel side.

The primary cover artist is Art Adams.

—PC—

COMICS REVUE

Written and illustrated by VARIOUS; edited by DONALD MARKSTEIN

64 black-and-white pages; magazine size; $3.95; monthly from MANUSCRIPT PRESS

More changes are in store for the monthly magazine of current comic strip reprints. Let's get the unfortunate one out of the way first: beginning with the February issue, **#26**, the magazine will be going up in price from $3.50 to $3.95.

With the first issue of the year, **#25**, we bid farewell to *Secret Agent X-9*—a sad occasion made more bearable by a special George Evans cover featuring (together for the first time) X-9 and Flash Gordon. Adventure fans upset by the defection first of *Spider-Man* and now of X-9 should be heartened to know that **#26** features the debut of *Modesty Blaise* by Peter O'Donnell and Enrique Badia Romero, while *The Phantom* makes his debut in **#27**.

As usual, *Hagar the Horrible*, *Bloom County*, *Latigo*, *Flash Gordon*, *Steve Canyon*, *Popeye*, and *Gasoline Alley* will continue printing more-or-less current strips. Underground fans should note that Bobby London, who was interviewed in **#24**, is the current artist on the *Popeye* strip.

Also coming from Manuscript Press in 1988 is the third year of the super-deluxe, $100.00, full-color *Prince Valiant* series, as well as a complete index of the *Prince Valiant* strip written by Todd H. Goldberg, M.D., and Carl Horak. The 64-page book will feature a color cover by Hal Foster, and lots of art. The exact release date and cover price are as yet undecided.

—JC—

CONAN SAGA

Written by ROY THOMAS; illustrated by VARIOUS, although mostly JOHN BUSCEMA; edited by MIKE HIGGINS

64 black-and-white pages; newsstand distribution; magazine sized; $2.00; monthly from MARVEL COMICS COMICS

Modesty Blaise, coming to Comics Revue.

This series will continue to collect the classic early issues of *Conan the Barbarian*, *Savage Tales*, and *Savage Sword of Conan*, with artwork by John Buscema, Neal Adams, Ernie Chan and Tony DeZuniga. The covers will be by Neal Adams, Boris Vallejo, and others.

CONAN THE BARBARIAN

Written by JAMES OWSLEY; pencilled by VAL SEMEIKS; inked by GEOF ISHERWOOD; edited by MIKE HIGGINS

32 four-color pages; $1.00; monthly from MARVEL COMICS GROUP

Conan will begin the year with "The Heku Trilogy" (issues **#206-208**), a grandiose tale set in the Eastern Patriarchy that is home to Kobe, Conan's apprentice. This will mark a major turning point for Kobe.

After that, Conan will return to his wanderings throughout the Hyborian kingdoms.

CONAN THE KING

Written by TO BE ANNOUNCED; pencilled by TBA; inked by TBA; edited by MIKE HIGGINS

48 four-color pages; $1.50; bi-monthly from MARVEL COMICS GROUP

The current *Conan the King* storyline will conclude with issue **#49**. As of issue **#50**, there will be a new look for the series, with a new creative team and stories that will recount events from earlier in Conan's reign as King of Aquilonia.

CONCRETE

Written and illustrated by PAUL CHADWICK; edited by RANDY STRADLEY

32 black-and-white pages; $1.75; bi-monthly from DARK HORSE COMICS

In *Concrete* **#6**, our stony hero receives a hard-luck letter from a family who may lose their farm if they don't receive help. Thinking it might be a fun experience, Concrete goes to the mid-West to help them, little knowing that he must face a jealous community reaction, and the festering secret of the family he's helping.

"One of the themes of this series," says creator Paul Chadwick, "is that this is a super-powered being in a very prosaic setting. I think that this issue, more so perhaps than any other, shows that. A super-powered character on a farm?!"

Issue **#7** is a switch in tone, and is promised to be "the most horrific issue of *Concrete*." When Concrete begins to grow horns, what happens? A preacher claims he's Satan, and as Concrete wants to remove the ever-spreading horns, Maureen becomes increasingly concerned about what they may mean to his physiology. As the horns grow and branch, Concrete's personality begins to degenerate, as does his life. Being horny was never this much of a problem!

A two-part story based on Chadwick's own trip to Nepal begins in issue **#8**, as Concrete mounts an expedition up Mount Everest. Issue **#8** shows his trek to the camp at the base of the mountain, as he carries steel cable to build the tremendous suspension bridges which bridge the gaps caused by rivers. The documentary crew he travels with will be the cause of much character humor, according to Chadwick, as well as the cause of plenty of culture shock.

Issue **#9** promises "much more of an edge to the story." As Concrete attempts to climb Everest, the very body that protects him from the elements also endangers him. "It's a lot harder for him than he thinks," says Chadwick. "He's a 1200 pound guy who can easily set off avalanches which might bury and kill him. On his way up, he finds many interesting things, and many twists in the plot."

Concrete gets horny in #7, which will be a "horrific" issue.

"I'm very pleased with the reaction to *Concrete*," says Chadwick. "I told myself when I started it that I would be very pleased if it was just a critical hit, and not a commercial success. It's been doing both, which of course is very gratifying."

A *Concrete Graphic Novel* is a possibility, which would expand on the first two issues in which he attempted a trans-Atlantic swim. "There was a lot more than happened on the trip, which, due to both pacing and length, I could not include. It amounts to about 26 more pages, so there will be a substantial amount of new stuff. This will happen in the future, but I'm not sure when."

Concrete will also appear in issue **#14** of *Dark Horse Presents*, but will not appear in that book for a while after that. However, a series of stories entitled "A Sky of Heads," which is written and drawn by Chadwick, will begin appearing in *Dark Horse Presents*. Graphitti Designs will also be releasing a *Concrete* T-shirt near the beginning of the year.

—AM—

COVERT OPERATIONS

Written by DIN BAILEY; illustrated by NIGEL TULLY; edited by PAT DAVIDSON

24 four-color pages; $1.50; monthly from VANGUARD GRAPHICS

"*Covert Operations* is Vanguard Graphics' anthology title," reports Vanguard spokeswoman Nancy Grummett. The book will introduce *Icarus*, a paranorm whose power of flight makes him valuable for all kinds of government work.

The *Icarus* storyline is described as a series involving spies, with a superhero or two thrown in. The action takes Icarus from Canada to the Bahamas where he meets Starshock, a beautiful young woman who discovers a natural ability to control something called the "Starhands."

Nancy Grummett promises "an action-packed adventure for anyone with a taste for intrigue," when *Covert Operations* hits the stands in February 1988.

—JR—

CRABMAN SPRING BREAK SUMMER SPECIAL

Written and pencilled by JOHN BEATTY; edited and inked by BILL BLACK

32 black-and-white pages; $2.00; to be sold at Dayton; not available through direct sales outlets from AMERICOMICS

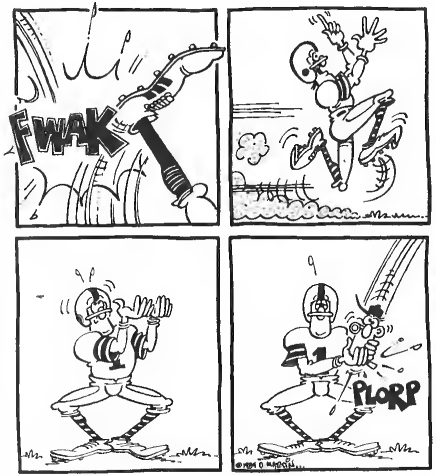
Normally I'd say that publisher Bill Black was reticent concerning the contents of his other titles—including *Armageddon Factor Dragonfly*, *Fantasy Features*, *Femforce*, *Sentinels of Justice* and *Venture*—but since he didn't want to tell me *anything* (presumably so that his zillions and zillions of readers would find the scintillating contents of his magnificent mags a surprise of quarkian proportions), I have to say that during our conversation, he was like one of those immense stellar objects whose mass is so great that not even light can escape from their field of existence. I guess that's why they call him "Bill Black."

He did say that in addition to the aforementioned *Crabman Spring Break Summer Special*—during which our world-renowned super-hero must face Suds McFloozie and her pack of Bimbos, all part of his effort to reclaim the terrific summer weather that's given

From *Covert Operations*—not starring Ollie North.

THE KICK-OFF

by D. MARTIN...



Don Martin in **Cracked?!** *You bet*

a goobleplex of kids down the years a fair chance not to say "no" regarding a great variety of topics—he's also going to be reprinting #1 of *Spring Break Comix*, a black-and-white that sells for $1.00, written and drawn by Ken and inked by Bill Black, who I know I've written about somewhere. If only I could remember. But something big and huge and mysterious in the spring break sky is sucking the information from my tortured and fevered brain. Can it be my mind is being affected? Stay tuned for my next listing, as ABC tries to earn as much money as possible from this silly interview. —ABC—

CRACKED

Written by VERY US, illustrated by VARRY US, edited by MICHAEL DELLE FEMINE

52-page black-and-white magazine: $1.35; bi-monthly from CRACKED

By the time you read this, you'll probably have had a few years of schooling. Even if you haven't you can still buy *Cracked*, because you can read and obviously you can afford to buy magazines that have questionable redeeming value in mainstream, stuck-up society.

You could run out right now and pick up an issue of *Cracked* #234 (unless it's 3 AM and you're indeficato). It's a Crime Fighters issue—with—ta-dah!—Don Martin! His first work for *Cracked* is a Martin-ized '88 calendar. Plus parodies of Batman —TV, movie, and comic—*Sledge Hammer*, *Robocop*, with talents like John Severin, Robert Loren Fleming, Steve Bissette, and Dan Clowes having Dick Tracy's brother investigate the Uggly Family in full color.

Nineteen eighty-eight heralds *Cracked Collectors' Edition* #74, celebrating 30 years! 100 pages for only $2.75 of the first work of many *Cracked* artists, such as Dan Clowes's first Uggly Family, Jack Davis, Will Elder, John Severin, Russ Heath, Bill Ward, Jay Lynch, Howard Nostrand, Al Jaffee, and lots more.

Meanwhile, back at the regular magazine, #235 has a Don Martin cover—an infinity one! (uh-oh, get out your Over-streets)—a Don Martin t-shirt giveaway, a *Star Trek: The Next Cancellation* beam-up—send up, Robert Loren Fleming tries *Perry Mason*, Peter Bagge lays out Dolly Parton, 50 years of Superman in covers, John Severin, Bill Wray, Rick Altergott, and Mort Todd.

Things are still tentative for #236, but they do got Robert Loren Fleming and Bill Wray doing a remake of *Gilligan's Island* starring Arnold Schwarzenegger, Sylvester Stallone, etc.

There is talk of an *Amazing Heroes* parody, where the villains take over.

In the spring, look for a 3-D cover by Ray Zone. —RB—

CRIME-SMASHER SPECIAL EDITION

Written by DANN and ROY THOMAS, pencilled by GLENN WONG, finished, co-created, and edited by CRAIG A. STORMON

32 black-and-white pages, $1.80, one-shot from BLUE COMET PRESS

Set in 1936 Los Angeles, *Crime-Smasher* is an adventure story about the criminal underworld in that time and place. The complicated plot involves two twins, Elliot and Jacob Sloan. Framed by his brother as a teenager for stealing a family heirloom, Elliot leaves the U.S. and goes to Shanghai. There he gets involved with smuggling, until one night he and his pal are shot at from the skies. It turns out the Captain of the English ship knows Jake well and sends Elliot back to the States to give Jake his "best" for the wedding. While at the reception, the two twins trade coats without noticing it, and the next morning, Elliot is shocked to read the papers and discover that he was killed the night before! Deciding not to tell anyone of the mix-up, he goes after his brother's killer.

Dann and Roy Thomas's **Crime-Smasher Special Edition**

CRIMSON AVENGER

Written by ROY & DANN THOMAS, illustrated by GREG BROOKS, edited by ROY THOMAS and MARK WAID

4-issue mini-series, 32 four-color pages, $1.25; monthly from DC COMICS, INC.

Continuing the adventures of the Crimson Avenger after his popular appearance in *Secret Origins* #5, the Thomases plan to keep this mini-series very "pulp-flavored. We're attempting to recreate the type of climate that existed back in the late 1930s," says writer Roy Thomas. "It is 1938, between Thanksgiving and Christmas. With the rise of an odd international group called the Black Cross, Lee Travis, the Crimson Avenger must find out who's in charge of it, and what they're up to." He finds out a lot more than he bargained for, and gets involved with stolen arms, spies, and other nasties of this pre-World War II period.

In the course of the series, the Crimson Avenger will find himself in conflict with all the different factions that will eventually be involved with the War: the Nazis, the Russians, the Japanese, the British, the Chinese, and, of course, the Americans. "This is really a peace-time American story, with a background of the world poised at the brink of war. The Black Cross group holds the keys to certain things which would be very crucial to the upcoming war."

Lee Travis, a young newspaper publisher, finds himself being inextricably drawn into situations beyond his control in his quests for the truth. "Although he never really planned on continuing the Crimson Avenger identity, he keeps adopting it. Should he try to be a newspaperman, a hero, or both? His Chinese Chauffeur, Wing, keeps trying to push him one way, while other people are trying to push him another way, the story is mainly about this man's decision as to what he plans to do with his future. Nobody knew what was going to happen in the future with the war beetween China and Japan. He's stumbling around in the dark, in an America which doesn't know where it's going to go itself. This is a fascinating milieu and time to be writing about. We hope it will be popular enough to warrant another mini-series or a regular series. It's been a lot of fun to write."

Crimson Avenger will premiere in early April. —AM—

CRITTERS

Written and illustrated by VARIOUS, edited by KIM THOMPSON

32 black-and-white pages, $2.00, monthly from FANTAGRAPHICS BOOKS

Critters during the first half of 1988 will be without the ever popular Steve Gallacci. Editor Kim Thompson explains that Gallacci was unhappy about the way that his "Birthright II" serial worked out. He felt that he was rushed due to other commitments, and he did not have enough time to develop the story properly. Therefore Gallacci won't undertake any new work for *Critters* unless he feels that he can complete it to his satisfaction.

However, there's a very good chance "Birthright III" will be appearing in this book by next Fall." Thompson said. "Serious progress is being made."

Stan Sakai's "Nilson Groundthumper" returns in **Critters** *#27, along with a special contest*

What will appear in *Critters* then? For one thing, a new "Gnuff" four-part serial by Freddy Milton. "Gnicky, Superstar," in issues #23-26, Gnuff decides that Gnicky isn't getting exposed to enough culture, so he enrolls the young dragon in piano lessons. Gnicky has neither any interest nor skill in the piano, until a piano lid cracks him on the skull and turns him into a virtuoso—temporarily. After a brief vacation, the dragons will return in *Critters* #28 or #29 with another four-part story—exactly which one has not been determined at press time.

Issue #25 will begin a new "Lion-heart" serial by Tom Stazer, in collaboration with *Alien Fires*, Anthony Smith, involving a two-headed, four-legged dog and a massive conspiracy to discredit Russia. Stan Sakai's "Nilson Groundthumper" will return as a cover feature in #27, and a contest will be held trying to determine just what kind of animal Hermy is.

There will also be a couple of "Fission Chicken" stories by J.P. Morgan. One of them, "Skip's Blind Date," doesn't actually feature Fission but focuses on his cranky friend Skip Squirrelheart. "They Saved Walt's Brain," another three-issue extravaganza, which features the return of both The Marketing Experts From Beyond and PU Evolcraft, as well as introducing new characters Dr. Frankenstang, his assistant "Strep" O'Coccus, the dead Walt Ditsy, and the wacked-out pop star Michael Jukeson. Also in the works are an anti-nuclear power tale, and "A Nightmare on Elmer Street Part 7 5/8," in which Fission battles Freddy Cruller, a nut with forks on his fingers.

J. Holland and Ron Wilber will contribute more "Lizards" stories, and William Van Horn will produced several short "Angst" pieces. A Blue Beagle story, "Cola Wars," will focus on Quax Bedroom, the computer-generated duck—possibly with a photographic cover. All this and funny animal work from Steve Bissette and Mark Schirmeister, too!

"Editing *Critters* is just about my favorite job," says harried editor Thompson. "Although the black-and-white crash has taken a big chunk out of the sales on *Critters*, it's still in a more or less 'safe' area, and I expect to be publishing my one thousandth page of funny-animal art late in the summer."

As for *Critters Specials*, it's by no means certain that any will appear during the first half of 1988—but there may be a two issue series reprinting the work of someone who has contributed to *Critters* in the past. Stay tuned. —FM—

CROSSFIRE

Written by MARK EVANIER; illustrated by DAN SPIEGLE

32 black-and-white pages; $2.00; monthly from ECLIPSE COMICS

Mark Evanier was so annoyed by having to talk to us for another *Preview Special* that he cancelled *Crossfire*.

No, not really. Mark loves to talk to us, but *Crossfire* is cancelled with its issue #26, coincidentally the first issue we were to cover. So what is it about, and what happens next? Read on.

Issue #26 wraps up a multi-part story, about a journalist who has been looking for the legendary Mkele Mbembe. The Mkele Mbembe is a true legend (?) about a dinosaur which lives in Africa, similar to the Loch Ness monster. In Scotland, that is. Crossfire must fight his very first foe, Scavenger, who returns to kill the journalist. Crossfire's new girlfriend, Heidi Holliday, and her son, Steve, journey with Jay Endicott to Africa to try to find Jay's friend Preston Pollard (the journalist) before Scavenger finds him, or before Pollard finds the dinosaur. Is the dinosaur real?

"There isn't a dinosaur," states writer Mark Evanier. "How could there be? There's only dinosaurs in comics." But isn't *Crossfire* a comic? "I think we've proved conclusively that *Crossfire* is not a comic book, by virtue of the fact of the large number of comic book fans that will not buy it!"

So how does the series wind up? "It wraps up like a typical issue. We don't find out that anyone's pregnant. Jay Endicott goes away from the newsstands until he shows up in the *DNAgents* mini-series sometime in 1988." In the mini-series, creator Will Meugniot returns, as do the popular "are-they-human-or-not?" teens. "I'm looking forward to the mini-series," say Evanier. "I've had a chance to re-think the characters, and Will's coming back, which is great."

Jay Endicott decides the time has come to reunite himself with Rainbow in the first issue, despite the efforts of various people to stop him. The revelation of the sixth life-form (revealed at the end of the *DNAgents*' second series) will play a major part in the series. Evanier would not reveal whether or not it was Rainbow and Jay Endicott's baby, or whether it was something else entirely.

"The massive rejection of black-and-white books on the newsstands has caught *Crossfire* in its undertow," says Evanier. "Since its inception, *Crossfire* has been a comic which has defied every know marketing strategy. Every reason a book goes up or down in sales, *Crossfire* has done the opposite. When we took away the color and raised the price, sales went up. As the marketplace increased and people decided our book was a better value, sales went down. Although it is still making money, it is evident that it may not continue for much longer. Since Dan Spiegle's been getting offers to do jobs paying him astronomical sums of money, we decided to just end the series."

Spiegle is also drawing the adaptation of Disney's *Who Framed Roger Rabbit?*, and Evanier and Spiegle are working on a new series for a major company. "This new series combines a lot of the elements that made *Crossfire* good, with some new elements, so it should go over great." The writings of "Mark Evanier, Boy Comedy Writer" will begin appearing in the new series as well. "You haven't heard the last of Jay Endicott, or Evanier and Spiegle. You've just heard the last of this particular *Crossfire* series for the time being." —AM—

CROSSROADS

Written and illustrated by VARIOUS; edited by RICK OLIVER

5-issue limited series; 48 full-color pages; price undetermined; monthly from FIRST COMICS, INC.

"We're not as big on huge shared worlds as Marvel or DC," says Rick Oliver. Nevertheless, First will be embarking on a major cross-continuity team-up series beginning in March, involving virtually all of its titles, with the exception of the Moorcock titles ("they already all cross over anyway") and *Lone Wolf and Cub*.

How does Oliver plan to connect the idiosyncratic worlds of such diverse characters as Whisper and Sable (20th century), American Flagg! (21st century), and Nexus (25th century)? Well, fortunately, First's line-up includes a few characters who aren't as firmly rooted to time and place as others, and these "wild cards" will help to create a continuity that doesn't ruin the inner coherence of the various universes.

The series kicks off with a logical team-up, that of Whisper and Sable, by Steven Grant and Cynthia Martin, in #1. Issue #2 picks up Sable and teams him up with The Badger, in a story by Mike Baron, pencilled by new artist Angel Medina, and inked by Rod Whigham. The Badger then goes jaunting through time (as he has in past issues of *Nexus*) and runs into Luther Ironheart, a bizarre team-up that will form the basis of #3; Roger Salick is the writer and Joe Staton the artist. Luther puts in a short appearance in #4 to keep the continuity going, but that issue is mainly a Grimjack/Judah Maccabee team-up, written by Salick and illustrated by Shawn McManus. And Mike Baron returns for the grand finale in #5, which unites Dreadstar, Grimjack, and Nexus for the very first time since the cover to *Amazing Heroes* #98. Brian Murray supplies the art.

At 48 pages per issue (possibly in the "prestige" squarebound format), this will be a *big* comic. Oliver promises that each issue will stand on its own as a story—this won't be like trying to read only, say, *Millennium* #5.

All the covers will be drawn by Steve Rude. —JC—

Cuirass—please pronounce her name right!

CUIRASS

Written by ALAN COWSILL; drawn by JOHN MARSHALL; edited by MARTIN LOCK

24 black-and-white pages; $1.95; monthly from HARRIER COMICS

Set on the same mystical world as Harrier companion titles *Barbarienne* and *Stormwatcher*, *Cuirass* focuses on the fate of the 16-year-old Miff, who, following the tradition of her community, must enter the harem of the local castle Lord on her 16th birthday. Her brother, meanwhile, is to become part of the nobility when he comes of age. The pair are by the sea shore on the eve of Miff's 16th birthday when she finds an ancient breastplate, the cuirass of the title. Deciding she would prefer to abscond than join the harem Miff leaves that night, with the breastplate. The Cuirass, however, is quite the mystical object of arcane magic, and Miff and her brother find that their future depends on locating the sword that accompanies the cuirass.

Anyone who's read this preview and distorted the correct pronunciation of the title to "queer-ass" loses ten credibility points and must begin reading the *Preview Special* again from the start. —FM—

ARMY SURPLUS KOMIKZ featuring

CUTEY BUNNY

Written and illustrated by JOSHUA QUAGMIRE; edited by CAT YRONWODE

32 black-and-white pages; $2.00; eventually from ECLIPSE COMICS

Once again, there is little to do but let Josh Quagmire speak his own piece.

"QT Bunny returns to print after a much too long hiatus, and still from Eclipse. (Though I don't know why cat and Dean put up with me. But I gotta admit they've been more than reasonable throughout this whole thing.)

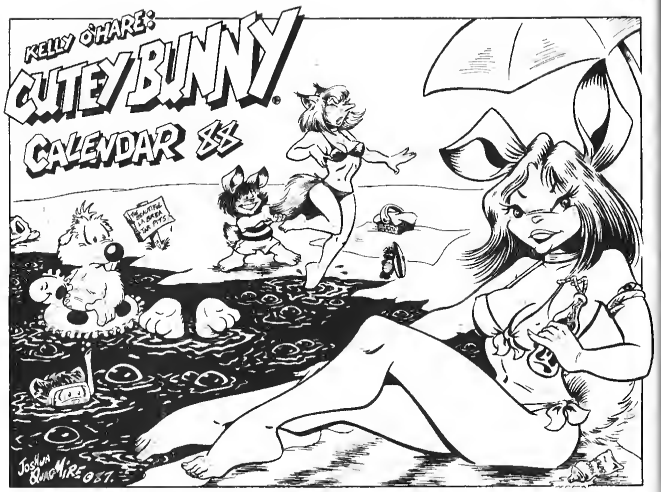
"Be that as it may, *QT #6* (due out early next year, '88) will sort of mark an end to things as they were and initiate a new beginning, as with *QT #7*. I'm planning on making several fundamental changes in the structure and direction of the book.

"This is a double barreled QT Bunny blitz! Leading off, Kelly O'Hare (a.k.a. Cutey Bunny) is up against her most bewildering case ever! In fact, it's so bewildering, I don't even understand it myself! I asked around and no one else here at the shop could make heads or tails of it either. I asked Dave, but he didn't understand it. I asked Dick, and he said, 'Beats me.' I just do the Zip-a-tone. I woulda asked Tubbins, but he was asleep. Barb says she understands it, but she wouldn't tell me. The way I see it, if QT solves this one, it'll be one corker of a mystery! (And even if she doesn't, well, we'll just fudge something together.)

"And hey, listen to this awesome list of superstars! Gawdzilla, Buffalo Bob, the Spruce Goose, Ronald Reagan, Gen. Douglas McArthur, Zazu Pitts, and Rex the Wonder Horse! What do they all have in common? Well, for one, none of them makes an appearance in *QT #6*. But they'll wish they had when they see who does. Have we got a story for you! Have we got guests? Have we got thrills, chills, excitement? Well... have we? Beats me, Barb wouldn't tell me that either.

"And that's not all. Getting down to the best part of this issue, (the ads) Kelly attends a meeting of the Cutey Bunny Fan Club to receive the adoration of her toadying fans. Also to check up on the receipts on the sale of her Cutey Bunny calendars, (only $5.95 plus a buck postage from: J.Q. Ent., PO Box 2221 Hollywood Cal. 90078) Kelly is non-plussed to find that that the Cutey Clubhouse has been taken over and subverted by her arch rival, Ashtoreth (the Fox), and converted into a combination Sushi Bar and massage parlor. Incensed and aghast by this, but mostly by the loss of the calendar revenues, Kelly disguises herself as a geisha bunny in order to infiltrate the establishment. However, when she attempts to serve sardine hors d'oeuvres she trips over a saki bottle and drops them down the back of the fox's kimono. Kelly is quickly disrobed... er, that is, unmasked, and taken captive by her former adoring fans who've been brainwashed to the state of total imbecility by Astoreth (the fox) who's force fed them to read thousands

The Cutie Bunny of Earth Too! Yow!



From this year's calender—eat your heart out, Paulina!

if not hundreds of pointy eared li'l Elfy Comix, thus rotting their admittedly already feeble cranial capacity and she (Kelly) is tied hand and lucky rabbit's foot with silken ropes, and dumped into the fox's "Playroom" (for later). Domm Da Domm Dommmm ... Meanwhile, QT's li'l sister, Taffy, has gotten wind of this perfidious plot twist, (she subscribes, and so received an advance copy of the comic) and with the aid of her QT Bunny Decoder ring, (available to QT Bunny Fan Club members only) sends a secret message via smoke signals on Gran'ma Phooby's still, to tip off Scotland Yard. Unfortunately, or perhaps, fortunately, all depends on how you look at it, Capt. Huey & the Nice Guy League intercept the message and with the aid of their own decoder rings, (get yours by subscribing to the QT Bunny Fan Club, c/o E.T. Bryan, P.O. Box 4509 Irvine, (rhymes with Irvine) Cal. 92716/4509. Only $6.00 per year). Yes, with the aid of their own decoder rings, they decode and totally botch up the message, and determine that QT has invited them to dinner at Ashy's Sushi Bar & Massage Parlor (The former QT clubhouse). The Nice Guy League arrive precisely at eight, properly attired in dinner jackets and hocky shorts, and when they find they can't order burgers & fries, they trash the joint. In the ensuing mayhem, Kelly manages to escape just before the fox is able to try out that good ol' fate worse than death routine on her.

"And so, everything turns out happily ever after for everyone, (except the fox, who gets her tail caught in the Iron Maiden). The QT clubhouse is restored to its rightful owners (me) ... though admittedly in numerous pieces, all no larger than a breadbox. Kelly, as a reward for timely liberation takes all the Nice Guy League to dinner at "Colonel Chicken's", and they trash the joint when they find they can't order burgers & fries. ... And what's more, best of all, *all* the Cutey Bunny Calendars are recovered and on sale now, (for a measley $5.95, plus a buck postage, from: J.Q. Ent. P.O. Box 2221, Hollywood, Cal. 90078). Hey! Cheap at half the price. Buy two, they're small!

"But did I say this was a *Double Barreled QT Bunny Blitz*? Yes, that's right! In this issue of *QT #6* you get two (count 'em) *two* Cuteys for the price of one! So who says this isn't the Marvel Age of Crassly Commercial Exploitation?!!

"For in *QT #6* we introduce the Cutie Bunny of Earth Too!! Ta Da! No foolin', folks! Hey would we lie to you? (Don't answer that question.) But sure as Uncle Sugar's gonna raise your taxes, we'll be featuring a 'reprint' from ***Bunnys at War*** number (sweet) 16 ... in which debuted Heather Ap-Glendower, a.k.a. Cutie Bunny, the cutest, cuddlyest crimebuster of the Second World War (or any war)! During ***Bunnys at War***'s initial run (1939-47), Cutie fought spies, saboteurs and misc. sundry German 5th columnists, on the homefront and in the war torn skies over London. With this first "reprinted" story, we reveal how Heather's adventures, as collected in comic book form, were the inspiration for Kelly O'Hare to follow in her staccato high heeled boot steps, when Kelly began her career as the present day Cutey Bunny (now where have I heard that one before?), and I should probably add, this is only the first of many reprints from subsequent issues of ***Bunnys at War*** now it can be told. Now that DC trashed Gardner Fox's grand concept we figured it was up for grabs.

"This idea actually goes back a few years. Why we haven't done anything with it before is hard to say (possibly common sense). In this, her origin story, (yes, that's right, another origin) Cutie Bunny takes to the blazing skies over London and flies into the teeth of the Luftwaffe's Blitz! She'll need more than a lucky rabbit's foot to get out of this one! Will they take an Aryan size bite out of her fluffy li'l cottontail? Good Lord, choke! Perhaps she'll even get a run in her silk stocking! Will their atrocities never cease? Don't fail to miss this pulse pounding action packed issue, stuffed cover to cover and tail to tummy with more bumptious bouncing bunnies than any one man has the right to expect!

"But, *you ain't seen nothing yet!!* All this stuff is just on the first page! Wait'll you see what else we got! What do these awesome omens portend? The discovery of an ancient lost city within the midst of the Peoria City Dump, the vision of mysterious saucer shaped lights in the sky, the gigantic pyramidical forms dimly seen approaching through the hazy twilight. Are these signs of the apocalypse? Is the Earth shuddering on the brink of coagulation? Will this set Kelly O'Hare off on her most amazing adventure ever?? Or does it mean that Quagmire's got the D.T.'s? Or perhaps it's just a cheap shoddy ploy to get you to by this issue? YES! None of this, and even less will be answered within the pages of *Cutey Bunny #6!!!* So be there, or be an equilateral nonrhomboidical form. Hoohah!!"

CYBERCOM: HEART OF THE BLUE MESA

Written and illustrated by MONIQUE RENEE and LOUIS LITTLE, edited by MARK SHAINBLUM

32 black-and-white pages $1.75, monthly from MATRIX GRAPHIC SERIALS

Series creator Monique Renee says she is glad that *Cybercom* will finally be reaching comics shops. The book has been trapped in a series of circumstances that have bedevilled Matrix over the last year (not the least of which was a flood).

Things appear to have settled down and Matrix is resuming publication.

Cybercom, as you might recall from the last two previews, is a Japanimation-style series that features yet another giant cybernaut. TX-19 is the sole survivor of a planet destroyed by a race of negative empaths. She follows them to Earth where they are planning similar destruction.

These negative empaths thrive on fear and hate and attempt to set up a climate of terror to generate their nourishment. They do this by taking over crime organizations in the Western hemisphere. The reign of terror that follows makes Chile (or, closer to home, Haiti) look like Sunday School picnic.

On Earth, TX-19 is drawn to an area known as Blue Mesa. Along the way, she meets and joins forces with a number of interesting characters. Characters who will appear include an undercover cop, a prostitute on the run from her pimp, a rancher (former mob informer?) and his daughter.

Within the Blue Mesa, TX-19 discovers a long-abandoned outpost that had been set up by her world.

The book will not just center on the character of TX-19. Renee says that she might not even appear in some issues. The ensemble cast is what will make the book work.

Science-fiction and political science will combine with sociology as Renee examines the effect TX-19 has on the characters she encounters and the way these characters react when their world changes from democracy to police state virtually overnight.

Coping with human rights that have been reduced to the state one might find in Chile or Haiti would be difficult. Cybercom will take a hard look at such a situation.

Also we will see how TX-19 affects other resistance groups (including remnants of the North American Army). Both friend and foe will be examined in the light of the existence of TX-19 and her mission to destroy the negative empaths (known as the Varrashe).

TX-19 is not purely a machine, either. She will eventually have to reconcile her sentience with her programming. This will result in an interesting internal conflict.

At least one sub-plot will involve an Atlantic-Canadian slant. "After all," says Renee, "I live here and you should always write about what you know."

Another plot-twist will involve our rancher's daughter and her inherent ability to gain access to the Blue Mesa outpost. This will lead into some speculations and revelations about her ancestry.

Renee also notes that the art will improve dramatically over the first four issues, since she's had plenty of time to practice.

Cybercom will feature a back-up entitled "3 to Infinity" which is written and illustrated by Louis Little. The series about three people who cannot live life their own way because of their society, should be a 10-part story.

Brokk, a slave clone, somehow becomes intelligent, which is not good. Vara is a female telepath whose abilities are natural, not drug-induced. This makes her a danger because she cannot be controlled. Jack T. Raven is an exterminator. He helped to rid newly discovered planets of dangerous creatures. When he develops a late sense of compassion, he tries to find better work and is assigned a position as fighter pilot.

The series traces the efforts of these three to escape the Galactic Empirem, where order is maintained by drugs and telepathic surveillance. Essentially, it is a series that reflects hope and desperation and the growth of trust. —sw—

CYBERTEX

Written by EDD VICK, pencilled by GUY BROWNLEE, inked by EDITH DEGOLYER, edited by JOHN NORDLAND II

32 black-and-white pages $2.00, semi-annually from BLACKBIRD COMICS

Earth after disaster—well, several disasters, actually: chemical, biological, nuclear—

What's that? It's the same preview that I wrote last time? Well, of *course* it is, it's the same comic I'm covering. It didn't come out in 1987 as hoped.

Doncha just hate these people* who announce a book, then don't bring it out 'til six months after it's supposed to appear? I do. That worm Vick says he got the scripts in for the first two issues with time to spare, and is trying to see that Brownlee gets the pages done soon enough for a March release. "At least," he quips, imagining himself funny, "We're not exactly late with the first issue yet, since Blackbird didn't solicit for it."

Anyway, that first issue has rollickin' robots, rock-'n'-roll, religion and the biggest dam' armadillo you're likely to see this side of Muleshoe, Texas. Read it if you dare—or something like that. —EV—

**Hey—if you can't make fun of yourself, who can you make fun of?*

D.P. 7

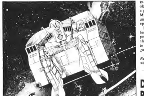
Written by MARK GRUENWALD, pencilled by PAUL RYAN, inked by ROMEO TANGHAL, edited by HOWARD MACKIE

32 four-color pages, 75 cents, newsstand distribution, monthly from MARVEL COMICS GROUP

Events in this book, at least during the first half of 1988, will center mostly on the aftereffects of *The Pitt*. John Byrne's New Universe one-shot in which the Star Brand destroys Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. *The Pitt* is, according to Mark Gruenwald, intended to be the first of a quarterly series of New Universe "bookshelf format" books, and the next one in the series, tentatively entitled *The Draft*, will spring forth from events in *D.P. 7*.

An inevitable name for a villain.

OK, OK, you want particulars. *D.P. 7 #18* will have our intrepid seven leaving the Clinic once again, and it may be some time before they make it back there, since their lives will become so intricately involved with events in Pitts—or rather, Smoking Crater—for so much of this year. Gruenwald reports that the site of the Pitt will become a sort of Mecca for paranormals, as it's obvious that the destruction of such a large city



A big goddamn robot from *Dai Kamikaze!*

must be the work of a paranormal of some sort, and the other paranormals in the world want to see for themselves what's happened and make sure it can't happen to their own home towns. This will be one of the reasons that the D.P. 7 make the trip down there, but not the *only* reason: there's a personal reason as well, as one of the 7 has a "big connection" with Pittsburgh, and the search for that connection will be the impetus that gets the ball rolling.

Also in this series of issues, readers will meet Lt. Col. Mack Browning, described by Gruenwald as a "major new character" who will co-ordinate the investigation of the Pitt and who will appear throughout the New Universe for some time to come.

Issue **#19** is described by Gruenwald as a "literal cliff-hanger" issue, inasmuch as some of the members of the 7 will head for the bottom of the Pitt. This, Gruenwald points out, is no mean feat: the bloody thing is no less than 25 miles deep. Also, expect Spitfire (of ***Codename: Spitfire*** fame) to make her re-appearance here: the first of a series of Spitfire cross-overs with the surviving New Universe books. Issue **#20** will begin a plotline involving the debut of some scavengers at the Pitt, paranormal scavengers no less. The leader of this pack will be a new character called Pitt Bull, and one can only guess what powers such a person will have. Issue **#21**—the last one Gruenwald has plotted—will show the last days of the Clinic's operation "as we know it."

Finally, in true Marvel group book tradition, a change in the membership is in the offing. Two of the original 7 will depart the group for an undetermined period, and two new members will take their place. While Gruenwald wouldn't name the departing members, he did give us the names of the two new recruits: Sponge, a female who absorbs moisture and air and discharges it by "spitting a lot," and Mutator, a male whose body changes shape uncontrollably every 24 hours . . . seldom for the better. "He's almost never human-looking," Gruenwald adds. "These are both two more in my series of gross, almost-useless powers. Collect 'em all!" —DF—

DAI KAMIKAZE!

Written by KIRK CHRITON; penciled by ROB DAVIS; inks and colors by JIM VALER; edited by CYGNET ASH and TONY CAPUTO

24 full-color pages, $1.75; published monthly by NOW COMICS

"There's going to be a big battle within the inner mind of Dai Kamikaze!" says series co-editor Tony Caputo. As a result, issue **#10** or **11** will see the death of all—except two—of the crew manning the giant robot ship.

Caputo says ***Dai Kamikaze!*** creators are playing around with the concept that the ship is possessed of its own intelligence. After most of the crew dies, there may be only a few new replacements made, as the ship really doesn't need a huge crew to man it.

These devastating events take place after Dai Kamikaze! goes to Highworld, where the insect-like aliens known as the Chirreck are encountered (issues **#8** and **9**).

Tony Caputo says that new issues of *Dai Kamikaze!* will feature airbrushed coloring, which he would like to see eventually in all of the NOW books. —JH—

DAREDEVIL

Written by ANN NOCENTI; penciled by JOHN ROMITA, JR.; inked by AL WILLIAMSON; edited by RALPH MACCHIO

32 four-color pages, 75 cents; newsstand distribution; monthly from MARVEL COMICS GROUP

The Kingpin has renewed his campaign to crush Matt Murdock, and even Matt's old law partner, Foggy Nelson, is himself a pawn of the crime lord. Foggy and Matt are involved in legal battles, but unlike the past, this time they are on opposing sides.

Issue **#254** introduces an insidious new foe, Typhoid Mary. She is a psychic-powered villainess with a split personality. In her Typhoid guise, she is trying to kill Daredevil, while in her Mary guise she is trying to seduce him.

Daredevil #257 is half of a ***Daredevil/Punisher*** crossover tale that corresponds with ***Punisher #10***.

DARK HORSE PRESENTS

Written and illustrated by VARIOUS; edited by RANDY STRADLEY

32 black-and-white pages, $1.75; monthly from DARK HORSE COMICS

Dark Horse Comics' premier anthology title will continue to feature work by current comic professionals as well as talented newcomers during the first part of 1988.

Issue **#14** will feature a special "jam" cover by Michael T. Gilbert and Paul Chadwick, of Concrete and Mr. Monster! Yes, the team who brought you its famed characters on the cover of this very *Preview Special* has teamed up for another cover! Inside the book will be a *Concrete* story by Paul Chadwick, another *Masque* story by Mark Badger, and Mr. Monster's first solo story for Dark Horse, by Michael T. Gilbert.

Concrete on the cover to ***DHP #16***.

Issue **#15** will see two features returning from issue **#13**. The first is the cover-featured Captain Crusader story by Gary Martin (of ***Doom Patrol*** fame), and *Babes 'N Arms* by John Lee and Michael Ebert, the comedic story of two sexy girls who are out to save the world. Another installment of *Masque* by Mark Badger will round out the issue.

Captain Crusader will conclude in **#16**, and *Babes 'N Arms* and *Masque* will continue as well.

Masque by Mark Badger will continue from issues **#17-22**, to complete the 12-part story. Upcoming issues will include a story called "Pizza Warriors," written by Bob Burden and drawn by Jim Bradrick. Shawn McManus is doing a five-page horror story, and Ross West ("Forgotten" in issue **#11**) is contributing some more stories. Ron Harris may be beginning a new *Crash Ryan* serial in *Dark Horse Presents*, as a follow-up to the Epic mini-series of a few years ago. —AM—

DARK WOLF

Written by R.A. JONES; illustrated by BUTCH BURCHAM

32 black-and-white pages, $1.95; monthly from ETERNITY COMICS

Following on the heels of the four issue mini-series of last summer, ***Dark Wolf*** returns in February as an ongoing monthly title. ***Dark Wolf*** is the second new title announced since the recent merger of Eternity and Malibu and will be published under the Eternity name, beginning over again with issue **#1**.

We're sure the logo will be more legible in the printed version.

According to author R.A. Jones, "The first issue, 'Only The Young Die Good,' reintroduces the lead character, re-caps briefly his first adventure, and sets the stage for events to come." The issue features Dark Wolf's alter ego, Father Michael Tremaine, attempting to help a young boy who not only has a monster living under his bed but inside his body as well.

Issue **#2**, "Riders Of The Purple Rage," pits Dark Wolf against a gang of bikers. "They've been driven murderously insane by the poisonous effects of toxic wastes dumped in the desert," Jones said. "It's a lot like *High Noon* with bikers and demons."

Following these single-issue stories, the third issue will begin a three-part adventure that will take Dark Wolf to a savage alien dimension and "deal him a shattering personal blow," according to Jones.

As in the mini-series, ***Dark Wolf*** will also continue to periodically feature real life guest stars in cameo appearances, although Jones declined to say who would appear next.

Dark Wolf #1 ships in late January for February sales. Retail price is $1.95. A special sneak-preview of the first issue will appear in Eternity's ***Solo Ex-Mutants #1***, which is on sale in early January.

DARKEWOOD

Written and edited by GORDON DERRY; illustrated by ADRIAN KLEBERGEN

24 full-color pages, $2.00; monthly from AIRCEL PUBLISHING

The events of this series center around the vast forest that is Darkewood. It is a place filled with ancient races, mystical beings and, of course, human adventurers. In Darkewood, the great cosmic forces that mold the universe (42?) come together, forming life out of chaos.

Obviously, then, the shadowy realm of Darkewood overflows with the most mystical of energies: magic is the source of life and without it Darkewood would shrivel and die.

Many are the demons and sorcerors who seek to steal the abundance of magical power within the forest, but they must contend with Darkewood's sworn protectors—the Council fo the Seven. These powerful witches and wizards are governed by the Darkelin King.

When the King dies, magic rages out of control and threatens to tear the Council apart. Meanwhile, demonic masters of chaotic energy called the Drakulords lurk just beyond Darkewood's borders—waiting for the right moment to strike.

Will a new Darkelin King be found in time? Or will the Drakulords seize control and spread chaos and evil throughout the land?

Among the characters we'll meet in this book are: Silverlain, a swashbuckling minstrel; Volkolis, a kindly tree-wizard and his talking staff; Mystyk, Baba Yaga, most think her to be a toothless old hag and nothing more—but she may be the oldest and most powerful witch of all time; Anar-akm, the Spider Sorceress (not a nice person), and her mutant goblin horde; Kreznik, a sly and treacherous sorceror, always probing the Underworld for secrets of ultimate power; Maianna, the beautiful forest sprite, gentle . . . but deadly when angered; and more gnomes, goblins and other strange and wonderful (and not-so-wonderful) creatures. And don't let's forget the trolls.

And, as Aircel spokesman Mike Carbonneau says: "Then it gets good!" —SW—

DEADFACE

Written by EDDIE CAMPBELL; drawn by EDDIE CAMPBELL and ED HILLYER

24 black-and-white pages, $1.75; bi-monthly from HARRIER COMICS/NEW WAVE

Originally conceived as a vehicle for enlarging on the carousing escapades of Bacchus, Eddie Campbell now explains: "It's only after drawing 105 pages that I have fully understood the sweep and

The eyes have it on this **Deadface** cover.

potential of the whole thing. The great golden age of the sons of Cronus (Zeus, Poseidon and Hades) and their godly offspring has gone, and their respective mantles have been passed down to a bunch of mortals. The whole series will be an enormous tale about the fall of the gods seen in bits and pieces of narration by the characters and in the deeds of the straggling survivors."

Those survivors from the original age are Hermes and Bacchus, who concludes the first story in issue **#4** by tracking down Joe Theseus to a Mexican bar. He'll then transfer to his own series [*see separate entry*]. Issues **#5-8** concentrate on those who've inherited the power of the Gods, Joe Theseus, the schizophrenic Eyeball Kid (whom Campbell intends to make "the most sympathetic character in comics") and a character described by Campbell as "the geezer who knifed Hades in the back." Theseus returns to regain control of the rackets he fled, and comes under scrutiny concerning his participation in the Sloane Bar massacre, chronicled in issue **#1**. "Meanwhile," notes Campbell, "a trio of villains are preparing to move in, the Telchines from Greek myth. They could cast the evil eye and by sprinkling the ground with the waters of the Styx mixed with sulphur they blighted the harvests and killed the flocks. But that was years ago, and they've picked up a lot of other stuff in the meantime." —FP—

DEADWORLD

Written by STUART KERR; co-plotted by VINCENT LOCKE and STUART KERR; illustrated by VINCENT LOCKE; edited by STUART KERR

32 black-and-white pages, full color cover; $1.50; monthly from ARROW COMICS (Mature Readers)

"Readers of ***Deadworld*** tend to be very creative, but strange," says series writer Stuart Kerr. "We've received letters with bites out out of them, we even received a letter in a plastic bag with a fake tooth and finger, and fake blood. And," Kerr comments, "they all love King Zombie."

King Zombie will continue to torment the surviving humans of ***Deadworld*** in issues to come ... even more regularly when the book goes monthly starting with #7 (January 1988). There will also be two covers printed for each issue—a "graphic" version and a "tame" version. "We decided to give retailers a choice when some complained that the covers were too violent," says Kerr. "However," he adds, "the 'graphic' version is outselling the tame one 2-to-1."

Issue #6 (November 1987) brings about the seemingly miraculous reappearance of Dan, who was thought to have been killed off in #4. Dan has been trying to catch up with the group since he was almost drowned in that horrific encounter, and when he finally does track down the group, he discovers that they have been captured by King Zombie. King Zombie delights in taking his revenge on the humans who escaped him twice before: rather than kill them outright, he cuts three fingers off of their current leader, Mike. Fortunately, Dan arrives in the nick of time and rescues all of the group ... except for one crucial member.

King Zombie makes away with Deake, the person who originally opened the gateway that allowed zombies to enter the human's world. King Zombie wants Deake to open the gate again, so that more zombies, demons, and monsters can make their way across. "Success also means a major promotion for King Zombie from his demon boss," says Stuart Kerr. Mike wants to go after King Zombie to stop the re-opening of the gate and to rescue Deake, but he runs into conflict with Dan over this plan in #7. Dan would simply prefer to kill Deake and end the problem that way. While Dan's attitude may seem *laissez-faire*, he has gained control of the human survivors' group because Mike is cracking up under the pressure.

"Somebody will die in #8," predicts Stuart Kerr, "but we don't know who yet." This issue also sees a big battle between the humans and the zombies, and Kerr promises lots of blood and gore. Deake does escape and runs away, but the gate is open just a crack. The laws of nature of both worlds begin mixing, and a mystical aura develops in the area surrounding the gateway. This affects the humans who happen to be in its vicinity. Dan's girlfriend, Donna, develops telepathy and clairvoyance, while Dan himself finds he has increased "tracking" abilities.

Issue #9 will begin a storyline Stuart Kerr calls "Punk City Towers." The humans (except Deake) make a dramatic escape from the battle scene when a group of punk rockers in a helicopter appear to rescue them. They are taken to a city in the southwest United States, but their elation soon turns to dread when the group discovers that the city is ruled by a Renegade Zombie. Stuart Kerr says that this storyline will continue on for the next 12 issues. The humans will search for a way out of the city, with the conflicts developing between the punkers and Dan's group; there will also be a confrontation between the Renegade Zombie and King Zombie, who is loyal to his demon homeworld. At the same time, King Zombie will continue his vendetta against the human survivors who have previously eluded him.

Also woven into this storyline will be the premise that other humans have survived in other parts of the country. Kerr envisions another community of about 20,000 people, mostly military personnel, who are fighting off zombie attacks. The book will look at these survivors and their experiences at sometime in future issues. —JH—

DEATH RATTLE

Written and illustrated by VARIOUS; edited by DENIS KITCHEN

32 black-and-white pages; $2.00; bi-monthly from KITCHEN SINK PRESS (Mature Readers)

"We're trying to get Rand Holmes and Jaxon in as much as possible," says editor/publisher Denis Kitchen, explaining his conception of ***Death Rattle***. "They're the two dominant contributors. And then we're trying to highlight the work of some lesser known artists. It's easier to introduce new people when they're sandwiched by artists like Jaxon and Holmes."

*Another Dean Armstrong cover for **Death Rattle**—hideous, isn't it?*

Jaxon's "Bulto, the Cosmic Slug," serial will continue to appear in each issue. And Holmes will be well-represented in coming months, as well.

A 19-page Holmes story, "Slide, Center, Slide," written by John Wooley, appears in the March issue (#15). Appropriately enough, as it will appear just as spring training begins, it's a baseball story—well, actually, it's about small town softball, but that's close enough. That issue also features a Holmes cover.

In the same issue, the installment of "Bulto" runs 14 pages, meaning there'll be 33 pages of art in that issue. The last page will actually be printed on the inside back cover.

The January issue (#14) has no Holmes work, but instead it's got a Dean Armstrong cover. He did the airbrushed cover to issue #7—"a really hideous cover," recalls Kitchen. "It got a lot of reaction." His second cover for ***Death Rattle*** will be "equally hideous," promises Kitchen. The issue also will feature stories by Bill Hartwig and P.S. Mueller and, of course, Jaxon.

Jaxon should wrap up "Bulto" in #18 next fall and ultimately will be collected in a single squarebound volume.

Would-be comics creators take note: Kitchen is always looking for new contributors to ***Death Rattle***. He says he would love to introduce more quality new talent in the book. —BE—

DEATH'S-HEAD

Written by JACK HERMAN; created and pencilled by NEIL and SIRI VOKES; inked by RICH RANKIN; edited by NEIL and SIRI VOKES

32 black-and-white pages; $1.75; bi-monthly from CRYSTAL PUBLICATIONS

Death's Head is a book featuring the character of the same name, who make his first appearance in ***Eagle*** #4. The story takes place 200 years after the storyline in ***Eagle***. Most of the world has been destroyed in a nuclear war. The alien Taliks, who first appeared on Earth back in the late 1800s, have returned to pick up the pieces for themselves. Crystal City is now Crystal Coast City, a megalopolis that stretches along the entire eastern coast of North America. At the city's center, Crystal Coast City is built atop the ruins of the old Crystal City. Here the city divides into Overtown and Undertown.

The Talik Overlords rule Overtown with their council of human puppets, The Six. The Six enforce their rule with a band of hard men known as the Regulators. They work under the supervision of the Talik Warlords.

Death's-Head is actually the reanimated corpse of a Regulator, named Marion R. Morrison, who was murdered in the temple of the ancient folk hero known as Richard Eagle. He relentlessly seeks vengeance against the Talik Overlords and the man who murdered him. He is also on the trail of a pack of Talik hunting dogs which are running rampant through the streets of Undertown, stalking innocent victims.

Regulators Gantz (Morrison's old partner) and Remus (who murdered Morrison) both learn about troubles in The Six' bureaucracy, sense the Taliks' distrust and hear the slight rumblings of an impending rebellion. Soon the Taliks will unveil their new secret weapon and anyone who thinks they stand a ghost of a chance against it ... is a dead man.

*ABOVE: **Death's Head** cover by Rich Rankin. BELOW: **Delta Tenn** by Mark Marderosian.*

DELTA TENN

Written and illustrated by MARK MARDEROSIAN

24 black-and-white pages; $1.50; published bi-monthly by ENTERTAINMENT PUBLISHING

Delta Tenn, Lady Cop, continues her assault on crime in the year 1998, in issues to come. Issue #5 will be a pivotal issue as there's a major shift in Delta's chosen career, and she must again face the meance of Gigabyte, the computer android that she previously battled in #4.

Delta goes up against corporate crime for the first time—and encounters mayhem and death—in #6. "Burger Mac Attack" will tell the tale of how, in 1998, two fast food giants have merged. "I've been polishing this script for six months and have been really looking forward to visualizing it," says writer/artist Mark Marderosian. "However," he adds, "I wanted to avoid placing the story in the flow of the book too soon. Events in #5 had to take place first."

Issue #5 also contains a free pin-up, which Marderosian has included as a way to say "thanks" to readers and retailers for their support. —JH—

DETECTIVE COMICS

Written by JOHN WAGNER and ALAN GRANT; pencilled by NORM BREYFOGLE; inked by NORM BEYFOGLE and OTHERS; edited by DENNIS O'NEIL

32 four-color pages; 75 cents; newsstand distribution; monthly from DC COMICS INC.

Denny O'Neil announces that John Wagner and Alan Grant's version of the Batman boasts "a distinctive gothic horror" flair, a dark atmosphere. "Wagner and Grant really have macabre imaginations," O'Neil adds. "Their stuff is *horrifying* ... not for the weak of stomach or heart!"

Interestingly enough, Wagner and Grant approach Batman intending to *alleviate* what they perceive as the excessively grim tone of the past few years by allowing for little humor in the material. Those who've seen their work on ***Judge Dredd*** will know that they're entirely capable of doing this while maintaining the necessarily intimidating Batman.

Wagner and Grant plan to introduce a selection of new adversaries for Batman rather than relying on the old standbys "because we don't like any of them." Similarly, few of Batman's supporting cast will be appearing here in anything more than peripheral roles as

they will be involved in stories running in the Batman title, with Robin globe-trotting there. This of course means that there will be no integration between the two Batman titles for the foreseeable future.

Readers have already made the acquaintance of the grotesque ventriloquist villain "Scarface" in ***Detective*** **#583-584**, the last two issues of 1987. The first villain of the new year is Rat Catcher, a twisted soul who used to be Gotham's official ratcatcher before serving a jail sentence for committing a crime. When released, he abducts everyone who he feels has wronged him, and keeps them imprisoned in the sewers for five years. Batman's involvement starts when one of the prisoners escapes to the surface, but dealing with the Ratcatcher is more difficult than it would seem as he possesses an uncanny control over rats. This two-part story begins in ***Detective*** **#586**.

"Cardboard City" will start and quite possibly finish in the following issue, when Batman investigates some disturbing events in hobo territory to find "a nightmare on Dead-End Street."

"It has taken me about a year to get my Batman house in order," O'Neil admits. However, the editor is so confident that the current teams on both ***Detective*** and ***Batman*** are producing material of such quality that he adds, "if I were a reader, *I'd* be buying this stuff!"

—MB/FPI—

DICK TRACY: THE EARLY YEARS

Written and illustrated by CHESTER GOULD; edited by SHEL DORF

72 pages; $6.95; squarebound trade paperback; quarterly from BLACKTHORNE

As the title implies, ***Dick Tracy: The Early Years*** traces the genesis of Chester Gould's famous detective. Issue #3 takes you from October 1933 through 1934, and includes the first appearances of many of the villains and secondary characters that have made Dick Tracy a lasting institution. This series should prove indispensable to all Dick Tracy completists.

—MSM—

DICK TRACY: THE "UNPRINTED" STORIES

Written and illustrated by CHESTER GOULD; edited by SHEL DORF

48 pages; $2.95; quarterly from BLACKTHORNE

Yes, it's yet another Dick Tracy book, but unless you're nearing 50, you haven't seen these stories. These are the Chester Gould classics from 1944 to 1945 that have never been reprinted. If you're *under* 50, and a Tracy fan, these will be to you what the lost episodes are to Honeymooners fans. If you're over 50, you're in for a trip down memory lane.

—MSM—

Never before seen—in comic books, at least.

DICK TRACY WEEKLY

Written and illustrated by CHESTER GOULD; edited by SHEL DORF

32 pages; $2.00; weekly from BLACKTHORNE

Chester Gould's famous detective returns in this popular reprint series that starts off where ***Dick Tracy Monthly*** ended. Beginning with Bonnie Braid's kidnapping, this weekly series reprints Dick's adventures starting from October 1951. Here come ol' Flattop.

—MSM—

THE DIGGERS

Written by STEVE KEETER; illustrated by TIM CORRIGAN

24 black-and-white pages with two-color cover; $1.50; quarterly from C&T GRAPHICS

Five archeological students stumble onto an ancient mystery, gain incredible powers, and battle forces of *true* evil—heroic action and adventure in the grand tradition!

DINOSAURS FOR HIRE

Written by TOM MASON; pencilled and inked by BRYON CARSON and ALEX LEONINE

32 black-and-white pages; $1.95; monthly from ETERNITY COMICS

They're big, they're bad, they pack serious "heat," and they work for the government of the United States. And they are supposed to be extinct. That's the premise behind ***Dinosaurs For Hire,*** the new bi-monthly series series debuting from Eternity in March.

"It's a pretty bizarre concept," said author Tom Mason, Eternity's creative director. "And there's going to be a lot of wild stuff and high adventure happening."

Some of that wild stuff—where the dinosaurs came from, how they came to have opposable thumbs, their association with the government, and how they function in a normal society—Mason has promised to explain in due course. "I hate origin stories," he said, adding that it's better to let the characters' background unfold over several issues.

In the first issue, the Dinos—as Mason refers to them—go up against Big Bob, a major New York crime figure who promises to be a recurring threat. Future issues will team them up with Dracula and an army of vampires, subtle invaders from outer space, and clones.

Dinosaurs For Hire is illustrated by Bryon Carson, who pencilled the mini-series ***Bones*** for Malibu, and Alex Leonine, who's also pencilling ***The Wild Knights*** for Eternity.

Dinosaurs For Hire *from Eternity Comics.*

DOCTOR ZERO

Written by DANIEL CHICHESTER AND MARGARET CLARK; pencilled by DENYS COWAN; inked by BILL SIENKIEWICZ; edited by STEVE BUCELLATO

32 four-color pages; $1.25; monthly from MARVEL/EPIC COMICS

Debuting in February, ***Doctor Zero*** will be the first of Epic's three interrelated "Shadow Line Saga" titles to appear. The three comics (the other two are ***Powerline*** and ***St. George***) are set in common world, not quite ours, in which a superior race (the Shadow dwellers) has evolved parallel to mankind, but remained hidden from them.

The Shadow race is distinguished from humans by tighter muscle structure, stronger bones, faster reflexes, a much longer life expectancy, and "an electro-chemical product of of the brain which allows enhanced abilities, which vary from Shadow Dweller to Shadow Dweller."

Doctor Zero is the highest pinnacle of a Shadow dweller," according to co-writer Daniel Chichester. Whereas most Shadow Dwellers have only one ability or power, Zero has lived for so long—thousands of years, though he only looks like he's only in his mid-30s—that that he has developed many abilities. He can levitate himself to a form of flight, he has telekinetic ability, he can push people mentally to make them believe what he wants them to, and he has the "Z effect"—the ability to encase an object in a vacuum, causing it to explode. But because of his superior abilities, Zero is something of an "outlaw" among his own race.

When the first issue opens, Doctor Zero realizes humanity has developed the potential to destroy the Earth and apparently is very willing to use that potential. Alarmed, he determines to change the situation and sets himself up as a superhero. However, the heroic pose is only an act. "He wants to appear as a heroic figure," says Chichester, "with the intent of manipulating and influencing humanity. He has his own goals and and his own purposes for what he's doing."

Zero makes his public debut in such a way as to ensure maximum media coverage. He first thwarts a terrorist attempt at the Empire State Building to stir up interest, then reveals himself and his name when he stops a sabotage attempt at a world economic summit in Tokyo a short time later.

But while Zero's public actions project a heroic image, he not above a covert deed (say, turning the balance of power in the Middle East with an assassination) if he feels it will advance his goals.

In issues #2 and 3, Doctor Zero targets a Prof. Henry Clerk, a world famous physicist working for the U.S. Defense Department as a weapons designer. Zero sees Clerk as a catalyst in man's development of "new and better ways to blow the world to hell," Chichester explains.

Unknown to Zero, Clerk has his own plans. He is something of a psychological basket case, out to pay the world back for never giving him the recognition awarded to an earlier contemporary, Dr. Albert Einstein.

A sub-plot developing at the same time involves a reporter, Adam Neushauk, who is developing a growing suspicion

When we're friends, can we call you ZeeZee for short? Art by Denys Cowan and Bill Sienkiewicz.

***Dog Boy #10**: Big Daddy Roth is back!*

about Zero and his powers.

The Shadow Line Saga books should be fairly easy to spot at your favorite shop, the result of distinctive covers. Bill Sienkiewicz is painting the covers for the first issue of ***Doctor Zero*** and the other two books. Covers to the second issues will be the work of Jay Muth. And Kevin O'Neill, Kent Williams, and George Pratt are set to contribute covers for future issues. —HE—

DOG BOY

Written and illustrated by STEVE LAFLER; edited by R. FIORE

24 pages; $1.75; seven or eight times a year from FANTAGRAPHICS BOOKS (Mature Readers)

In ***Dog Boy #9***, our hero will be "Cornered by Cats." Watch as Steve Lafler deftly weaves journalism, foxtrotting felines, Nicaragua, and graffiti into a seamless whole. As of this issue before, Dog Boy had started a muckraking political magazine named *Graffiti* with—at da' Boy's insistence—a trout fishing setup in the office. Bemb, ostensibly as a photojournalist, goes on an undercover assignment to Managua. *Graffiti*'s backer's overweight, unattractive sister starts putting the moves on Alfred Knoot. Dog Girl gets arrested for slapping graffiti (the real stuff, not the magazine) all over the governor's mansion. There's also the return of—

But no. Perhaps it'd be best if Steve told you himself, "There's a character that I used to use six or seven years ago that I'm bringing back in this story. His name is Mr. Poop. For years the squeamish little turds that couldn't stomach an innocent poop joke have kept him under wraps. He's had *enough* of it, so he's back—and he doesn't want any of these '60s bullshit comparisons [to undergrounds] haunting him. People are going to have to admit that they have to deal with him almost every day." Lafler laughs and adds ruefully, "Fantagraphics will just be delighted to see this."

In the last couple of pages there will be an update on the "How to Publish Comic Books" story in the third Fantagraphics issue of ***Dog Boy***. "For those who care to really pursue this cartooning update," Lafler asserts, "it's really important to get lots of cats—dancing cats—in your studio if you're to have any chance at success."

The cover of ***#10*** has a Dog Boy gunning dragster in Big Daddy Roth style, holding up a ripped-out gearshift and balancing a surfer jam wearing, dancing cat on his head. "With a cover like that," says Lafler, "it should be a pull-out-all-the-stops art kind of issue. Although . . . I don't know, it could be a down-and-dirty, bite-the-cop-on-the-head kind of issue. We may even call in the Werewolf bikers on this one."

Issue ***#11*** is likely to appear in late spring as well, replete with, as the writer puts it, "the usual slapstick, sight gags, and shenanigans." Oh yeah, "and Dog Girl in her leather miniskirt." —EV—

DOG SOLDIER

Written by TIM TRUMAN & CHUCK DIXON; illustrated by TIM TRUMAN; edited by CAT YRONWODE

One-shot; 48 black-and-white pages; price undetermined; from ECLIPSE COMICS

Dog Soldier is a project that has been three years in the making, and will finally see the light of the newsstand in June. It also represents the first 4Winds Graphic Novel from Tim Truman & Chuck Dixon. It is something that Truman has been picking at for four years, drawing a page here and there. He sent the general idea in a letter to Dixon, and described the character sitting at a table drinking from a bottle of tequila. Dixon, for his part, went away to Maine for two weeks and wrote the story. Truman was finally able to complete the book during his layoff from ***Scout*** last summer. They both laughingly describe it as "Sergio Leone directing *Dawn of the Dead*." The story takes place in 1911 New Mexico. It is a western with a strong, supernatural element, very strange book indeed.

Truman describes Dog Soldier as part black and part Cheyenne, as close to Solomon Kane as he is to The Man With No Name. He has been mercenary in Haiti, The Philippines, China, and Africa. He has had contact with the supernatural, and men of evil know of his existence. He goes up against a Brujo who has called up 13 zombie gunfighters. "This is the most violent thing I have ever done," says Tim, "it makes the more violent things that I did in ***Grimjack*** look like a Disney nature flick." Dixon's script pulls no punches, either. He laughs, "This will be the last Truman-toughguy character, I promise. From now on I will offer a larger palette of characters. The advertising blurb will read—"Dog Soldier: he's a son of a bitch!"

Dog Soldier will be 48 pages with a full color wraparound cover. It will be done in black and white to preserve the film-noir quality of it, and the special line work that the luxury of three years affords you. —ES—

DONALD DUCK

Written and illustrated by CARL BARKS and VARIOUS; edited by BYRON ERICKSON

32 four-color pages; 95 cents; newsstand distribution; eight times a year from GLADSTONE COMICS

With the move of longer adventure stories into the new companion title, ***Donald Duck Adventures***, ***Donald Duck*** itself will continue to concentrate on several shorter gag stories each issue. Upcoming in future issues, besides the usual Carl Barks reprints, are more European-produced stories from Denmark's Gutenberghus. One particularly unusual item promised by Editor Byron Erickson is an American reprint from the '40s: a Walt Kelly story in which Donald dreams he is Pinocchio! Up to now, covers have been by Daan Jippes, but he has lately been tied up with work on the Disney Studios' new animated feature, *Who Framed Roger Rabbit?*, so fill-in covers by Danish artists are planned for use as necessary. —DRD—

*Tim Truman's wraparound cover for **Dog Soldiers**.*

DONALD DUCK ADVENTURES

Written and illustrated by CARL BARKS and VARIOUS; edited by BYRON ERICKSON

32 four-color pages; 95 cents; newsstand distribution; eight times a year from GLADSTONE COMICS

This title specializes in running the longer Donald Duck adventure stories pioneered by Carl Barks and since continued by other artists and writers.

Cover by Daan Jippes.

At press time, only the planned contents for issues #4 and #5 are known. Issue #4 will reprint Carl Barks's story "Frozen Gold" from Dell's ***Donald Duck Four-Color #62*** (1945). This story was reprinted before, in 1974, as a graphic novel in Golden Press's ***The Best of Walt Disney Comics*** series, but some eight panels were deleted from that appearance. The Gladstone version will be complete. ***Donald Duck Adventures #5*** will be an all-outer space issue, including a 10-page Carl Barks story about a race to the moon and a 16-page Dutch Donald Duck story by Ben Verhagen. Covers for both issues will be by Daan Jippes. —DRD—

DOOM PATROL

Written by PAUL KUPPERBERG; penciled by ERIK LARSEN; inked by GARY MARTIN; edited by BOB GREENBERGER

32 four-color pages; 75 cents; newsstand distribution; monthly from DC COMICS INC.

Editor Bob Greenberger mentions that the title should maintain a regular creative continuity for the next year, as artist Erik Larsen is under contract to draw ***Doom Patrol***.

While the veteran members of the team are in Nicaragua as a result of the ***Doom Patrol/Suicide Squad Special***, ***Doom Patrol #7*** initiates a two parter which examines the three new members to the team: Rhea Jones, who readers also know as Lodestone, plus a pair of men named Wayne and Scott, each with an interesting background that may affect the entire book's characters in the months to come. Issue ***#7*** also marks the debut of Shrapnel, and Erik Larsen-created villain who is *living metal* . . . and has an ugly habit of exploding while in the company of others.

The full DP roster is present in ***#8*** as the Shrapnel story is concluded.

A series of extended sub-plots in ***Doom Patrol #9***, carrying on into issue ***#12***. The struggle between Larry Trainor and Valentina Vostok over the negative energy being intensifies, as "Larry wants it back, but Val wants to keep it," explains Greenberger. "Their resolution to this problem sort of involves the Suicide Squad . . . but not quite."

A new plotline revolves around Cliff Steele's stockpiling of spare robot parts on his ranch, attracting the interest of another robotic character from the DC Universe. This segment leads into a Doom Patrol/Superman team up, which will also cross over into one of the Man of Steel's titles.

The entire team will soon sport brand new costumes designed by Erik Larsen. These uniforms harken back to a visual style reminiscent of the original Doom Patrol.

Although readers will still lovingly refer to him as Robotman, Cliff Steele will continue to refer to himself by his christened name.

A sub-plot that has slowly been woven into the book's continuity involves Kansas City's extreme dislike of a super-team headquartering themselves in their area. This story will climax in the pages of ***Doom Patrol Annual #1***, on sale this summer. The art team for the annual is Joe Staton (who drew the new DP's first adventures in ***Showcase #94-96***) and Al Vey. Lex Luthor—sans Superman—will also pop up in that story. —ME—

DOUBLE DIAMOND ANTHOLOGY

Written and illustrated by VARIOUS edited by DAVID M. LYNCH and DAVID A. GENEREUX

24 black-and-white pages $1.75, published bi-monthly by DOUBLE DIAMOND ASSOCIATES

"The stories planned for publication in ***Double Diamond Anthology*** will either be one-shots or will have concepts to continue or spin off into other books," says David M. Lynch, series co-editor. Each book will present two or three rotating features.

Issue #1, due out April/May 1988, is scheduled to feature "Beautiful But Deadly," a one-shot offering by Ken Penders (writer and artist). Penders, whose work has been seen in ***Man From U.N.C.L.E.*** and ***Who's Who in Star Trek***, will be doing the cover for that issue as well.

Issue #1 will also present "Talon," a post-apocalyptic sword-and-sorcery tale created by Mike Luck (artist for DDA's ***Prototype***). The entire "Talon" story will be told in 15 chapters.

An all-new adventure for David M. Lynch's character "OHO" will be the third feature in the premiere issue. "OHO" first saw print in mini-comics, and is entirely written and drawn by Lynch. —JH—

THE DRAFT

Written by MARK GRUENWALD and FABIAN NICIEZA, art team TO BE ANNOUNCED, edited by HOWARD MACKIE

48 four-color pages, prestige format, $3.50, one-shot from MARVEL COMICS

Pittsburgh has been destroyed and the United States has decided to accept Libya's claim of responsibility. Since World War III is on the way, the United States re-institutes the military draft.

The draft will fill two needs. It will provide a full army for war, and it will locate the paranormals in the U.S., something other nations have already been doing for some time. The American paranormals will be separated from the other inductees and sent to a special training facility, where they will be molded into a special fighting force.

They will be the first force sent into the war zone.

DRAGON LADY PRESS

Written and illustrated by VARIOUS, edited by JOHN BIERNAT and DAVE DARRIGO

72 black-and-white pages $2.95 or $5.95, bi-monthly or quarterly from DRAGON LADY PRESS

As always, the Canadian-based Dragon Lady Press continues its long line of comic strip reprint magazines.

This time out, DLP editor Dave Darrigo notes that a number of DLP's regular titles are running behind schedule due to the special *Alley Oop* series that DLP undertook to produce for late '87. Published in a Deluxe Format, the *Oop* series should be completely available as of our publication. The three issue series features the origin of Alley Oop, the very first time-travel story, and more. The prices of these albums: Vol. 1—$5.95; Vol. 2—$6.95; Vol. 3—$7.95. These stories feature the art of V.T. Hamlin, a detailed stylist who was, and still is, vastly underrated, according to Darrigo.

Darrigo also apologizes for the lateness of regular titles, hastening to add that "people must realize that DLP is a part-time operation with a minimum staff. When something like the *Alley Oop* contract comes up, these disruptions occur."

Now back to our regularly featured titles:

THRILLING ADVENTURE STRIPS, bi-monthly. Issue #11 features Terry and the Pirates in two George Wonder stories from 1948 and 1954. The issue will feature a new Alex Toth cover. Toth also supplies a four page portfolio, which can also be found in ***Dragon Lady Presents*** #8. Issue #12 of ***Thrilling*** will feature *Smilin' Jack*.

CLASSIC ADVENTURE STRIPS, bi-monthly. #13 features the Mac Raboy *Flash Gordon* from the '40s. Cover by Ken Steacy. Issue #14 features four *Secret Agent X-9* tales with art by Alex Raymond, Mel Graff, Austin Briggs, and Stanley Pitt.

SERIALIZED EDITION, bi-monthly. ***Serialized Edition*** features *Capt. Easy and Wash Tubbs* in continuing chronological reprints. No plans have been made to change the focus of the book even though earlier *Capt. Easy* adventures have been licensed out to NBM. Editor Dave Darrigo noted that "the stories that they publish are from another whole period and shouldn't conflict with our series at all."

THE COMPLETE MAX COLLINS DICK TRACY, quarterly. One of the books most delayed by DLP's *Alley Oop* contract. Apologies are offered. The book will be back on track soon and issue #4 will feature a Ken Steacy cover.

FRANK ROBBINS' JOHNNY HAZZARD, quarterly. Issue #5 will be out in early '88. The storyline finds Hazzard on a "lost island in the Pacific" and involves dinosaurs. Alex Toth is the regular cover artist for this title.

DRAGON LADY PRESENTS, quarterly. Issue #8 will feature the George Wonder *Terry and the Pirates*. Also featured is a Dragon Lady tale from the '50s. Cover by Toth. Issue #9 features *Secret Agent X-9* in some strips from the early '70's by Archie Goodwin and Al Williamson. Cover by Toth. —SW—

DRAGON'S STAR

Written by MARYANN BRAMSTUP, illustrated by IAN CARR, edited by MARK SHAINBLUM

32 black-and-white pages, $1.75, bi-monthly from MATRIX GRAPHIC SERIALS

Another title that had been in limbo during the problems at Matrix, ***Dragon's Star*** is finally back on track. Just goes to show that even a flash flood can't keep a good dragon down.

This series continues the adventures of Marrik and Chandra Hawthorne, a dragon and his human niece.

So far we've seen Marrick blackmailed into salvaging evidence and the possible location of a major weapon. We've seen a head of security turn traitor. We've met Jeremy Hawke who seems to be a ruthless and manipulative S.O.B. And we've seen the empire and the Shonn rebels at their best (and worst).

As the plot line gets more intricate, we meet Jeremy's parents (his mother, Cassandra, is a well-established madam and source of intelligence. His father ...). By #6 the universe has been saved by Chandra with a little help from ...

In issue #7, our heroes return home. Marrik, grumpy old dragon that he is, adopts Chandra, while Jeremy's reward is a heartstopper—he is made head of security. But first he gets to take some R&R with his mate, Tabitha.

Marrik heads for home, but cannot take Chandra with him, so she gets to stay with Hawke's family. Since she has a crush on Hawke, things get sticky when he and Tabitha get back on good terms. Chandra becomes thick as thieves with Hawke's daughter Diedre.

On his home world, Marrik finds human poachers who are ignoring the quarantine on the planet.

In issue #8, Marrik declares war on the poachers, who find themselves the victims of some serious guerrilla warfare.

In issue #9, Marrik is awakened by Jonathan Hawthorne. Chandra's *late* father who says, "We have to talk!" Meanwhile, Chandra interrupts Jeremy and Tabitha during. As it happens, she's had a terrible nightmare of Marrik in trouble.

Because of her certainty, she and Jeremy set out to rescue Marrik.

In issue #10, Jose Delgado gets taken out on a pub crawl by Marrik, Jeremy and Chandra. As part of what he has coming to him, he gets sent into a human gay bar.

Dragon's Star will also feature some interesting back up features. The most intriguing one mentioned is a prose short story in which we encounter a stowaway that appears to be an intelligent black Siberian Tiger. The title? "Kitty."—SW—

DRAGONFLAME

Written by DON McGREGOR, illustrators to be announced, edited by DEAN MULLANEY

3 issue mini-series, 32 full-color pages, $1.75, bi-monthly from Eclipse

What can you say about a comic about which there is next to no information? Not much. Don McGregor will be adapting his book ***Dragonflame*** into comic book form. The series was originally to have been illustrated by Stan Woch, but Woch is far too bogged down with previous commitments [*see* ***Airboy*** *entry for details*]. Look for a penciler notorious for his cinematic technique to take over the art chores, but we're not allowed to say just *who*... yet. —JW—

DRAGONRING

Written and with layouts by BARRY BLAIR, illustrated by DALE KEOWN, edited by MIKE CHARBONNEAU

32 full-color pages, $2.00, monthly from AIRCEL PUBLISHING

With the completion of the Uni Stone storyline, Barry Blair will be involving the Dragonring in other major world problems.

Now financed by S.P.L.I.N.T.E.R., a Special Operations Division of the U.N., the Dragonring becomes a group of international troubleshooters who face any assigned challenge. Having been brought together by fate and bound together by duty, the new Dragonring must overcome unspeakable powers both human and supernatural. Only by working as a team will they have even the slightest chance for success.

The new adventures of the Dragonring will involve magic and mystery action and suspense, humor and espionage. In fact, the possible directions for the book are virtually unlimited.

The new Dragonring team is composed of Kohn Drake, leader and traveller of the Orient, and an adventurer in his own right; Holly Sental, a Star Warrior from the distant Stevlar Monastery in a different time frame; Maire Siddons, a witch bound by good *and* magic; Mary Quay, a Vietnam vet whose love for Maire is equalled only by his dedication to the Dragonring; Da Feng, a powerful leader from Monkey Island, who is searching for his lost tribe; and Kamakazi, a one-time underworld figure who now seeks to use her samurai training and abilities to help people instead of destroying them.

The new Dragonring team promises to be a volatile, unstable mixture of personalities and beliefs—resulting in some interesting sub-plots and plot twists.

The first several issues featuring the new team will present them with great opposing forces that will enable them to grow together as a team.

There will also be issues that will focus on two of the team members. Da Feng and Kamakazi. The Kamakazi issue will feature her reconciling her past withher present affiliation with the dragonring. The Da Feng issue will find Da Feng answering a magical call to return to Monkey Island as he continues the search for his lost tribe.

Then, as the team finally gets it all together, they must face their greatest challenge. —SW—

DREADSTAR

Written by JIM STARLIN, pencilled by LUKE McDONNELL, inked by VAL MAYERIK, edited by RICK OLIVER

32 full-color pages $1.75, bi-monthly from FIRST COMICS

Issues #36-39 will be a four-part story, concerning Dreadstar and Oedi's Special Service Group dealings with a masked assassin called Last Laugh. Last Laugh seems to be trying to upset the current government and bring back the Monarchy, even though there are no people left from the Monarchy. Last Laugh is introduced in issue #36, while in #37, someone in the Special Services Group dies, in "the least expected way."

Issue #38 finds most of the cast trying to deal with the death, while Dreadstar confronts Last Laugh, and Willow takes on a special project destined to change the very nature of the Universe, a project which reaches fruition in issue #39. That issue will also see the return of Doctor Delphi, and will tie up a lot of loose ends from the entire series. —AM—

THE DREAMERY

Written and illustrated by VARIOUS, edited by LETITIA GLOZER, conceptual editor, LEX NAKASHIMA

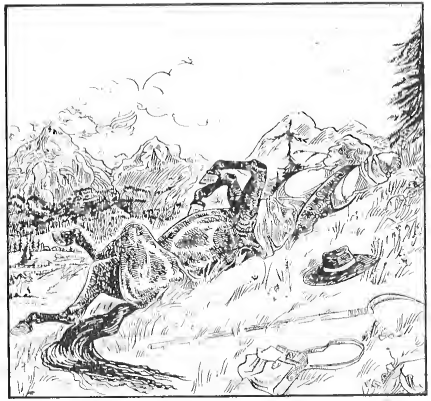
32 black-and-white pages, $2.00, bi-monthly from ECLIPSE COMICS

The next six issues of this fantasy anthology title will see the appearance of several artists new to ***The Dreamery***. Monika Livingstone with "Lord of the Forest," a cautionary fable about a fox and a tiger (script by Lydia Marano, based upon a Chinese folk tale). Mel White of ***Duncan and Mallory*** fame, doing a coyote legend; later, Somtow Sucharitkul's "Trixie" (a Valley Girl in a Land Without Shopping Malls); still later, some bits by Steve Gallacci, fresh from ***The Dreamery***'s s-f counterpart, ***Fusion***.

Continuing will be Lela Dowling with more Carrollian bits following the conclusion of her adaptation of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*; and Donna Barr doing a series of stories about the young Stinz (i.e., flashbacks showing the youth of her popular centaur-farmer).

The writing staff will be joined by the notable Diane Duane, author of numerous science-fiction and fantasy novels

From ***Dreadstar*** *drawn by Luke McDonnell and Val Mayerik.*



A Donna Barr panel from **The Dreamery**

and comics (*Green Lantern Corps*, *Star Trek*). She will bring to *The Dreamery* stories about dead princes, whale myths, and unicorns in the subway. —KPo—

DROOPY

Written and illustrated by TONY BASILICATO and OTHERS; edited by RICH MAURIZIO

28 full-color pages, $1.50; newsstand distribution; bi-monthly from SPOTLIGHT COMICS

"Y'know what? Ah'm in a fun nybook." Fresh from his appearance in *Tom and Jerry* #1, MGM's Droopy headlines his own Spotlight title beginning in March.

The little mutt with the Buster Keaton face was created by animation giant Tex Avery in 1943, and has remained a cartoon staple ever since. His comic book adventures will primarily be handled by Tony Basilicato, whose work has also seen print in *Prime Slime Tales* and *Mighty Mouse*.

A trio of other MGM properties will rotate in the back-up slots in *Droopy*: Screwy Squirrel, another Tex Avery creation described by editor Jim Main as "one of the most hilariously violent characters I've ever seen." George and Junior, a riotous pair of bears with an Abbott and Costello-like relationship, and Barney Bear, a dopey character that should be no stranger to anyone who has ever tuned in to an afternoon television cartoon program. (Carl Barks drew a whole series of *Barney Bear* stories in the '40s which have not been reprinted since in America, although they appear regularly in various Scandinavian funny animal comics.) —MR—

E

EAGLE

Written by JACK HERMAN; plotted and illustrated by NEIL D. VOKES and RICH RANKIN; edited by NEIL and SIRI VOKES

32 black-and-white pages, $1.75; monthly from CRYSTAL PUBLICATIONS

After the completion of the 12-issue epic with martial arts and mysticism, *Eagle* begins a new storyline starting with issue #13.

As mentioned briefly in previous issues, the world in which *Eagle* takes place was beset by an alien invasion during the late 1800s. These aliens, the Taliks, were defeated and many of them have since integrated into human society. But there is a secret Talik Underground that has infiltrated many of governments of the world and now feels that the time is right for the Taliks to once again make a bid for world dominance.

Richard Eagle is caught in the middle of a complex spy plot involving: a lost mathematical formula capable of locating warps in time and space, the festive technological Mardi Gras known as the Crystal Exposition, the Talik Underground, and a beautiful female secret agent that bears an uncanny resemblance to his long dead wife, Kathy.

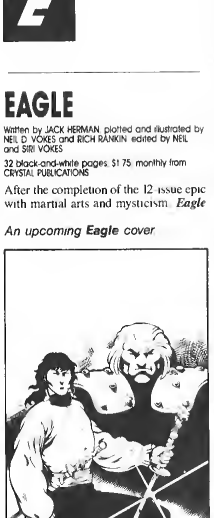
This storyline should run for approximately five issues and is especially notable for the plot contributions of *Eagle* co-creator and inker Rich Rankin.

Among other future plotlines: the current whereabouts of Wulfgar's son Alarik; continuing problems in Mayor Thornton's administration; mysterious experiments at General Genetics and of course Eagle coping with the possession of his malevolent mystical orb.

Sometime around issue #17, *Eagle* scripter Jack Herman will write an issue introducing a new villain as well as show us where Eagle gets most of the ancient artifacts and magical paraphernalia that fills his temple.

Following that, the next major storyline will involve a character that has not been seen since issue #1.

An upcoming **Eagle** *cover*



EDDY CURRENT

Written and illustrated by TED McKEEVER; edited by JAN STRNAD

12-issue limited series, 32 pages, $2.00; monthly from MAD DOG GRAPHICS (Mature Readers)

Issues #5-8 of *Eddy Current* contitute chapter two in his evolution as a superhero. McKeever likens the series' structure to *Catcher in the Rye* or *Clockwork Orange*, "... in the sense that [Eddy] goes through a lot, until in the last chapter all of those earlier learning experiences are put to use." That "last chapter" will be issues #9-12, each lasting an hour of our hero's freedom from the mental institution.

The nun from the last two issues, and her partner Slim, will become more prominent characters. Although as quirky as all of the book's characters, she is not quite as bizarre as advertising has painted her. "Jan [Strnad] promoted her as 'The Mad Nun,'" says McKeever, "She may be a little crazy, but she's not 'The Mad Nun.' Slim and Nun (don't blame me, it isn't *my* pun) side with Eddy in #7. Before that team has a chance to gel, though, he has to recuperate from the effects of the concussion dealt him by his fall at the end of #2.

That crack on the head has him thinking he's the Amazing Broccoli. "He loses—not that he ever completely had it—he loses the connection between the comic book and reality." There will be some parallels drawn in #5: the superhero will be shown accomplishing some feat which Eddy will attempt to duplicate, demonstrating its impossibility. Slim and Nun, having seen him fall from "the heavens" and mistaking his spiked hair for a crown of thorns, take his posturing language in his Broccoli persona for gospel (if you will). They think he's the Second Coming, and hope to cure him of the aberrant behavior they believe his occasional lapses into his own self to be. His mental state will worsen. "He will essentially be laid up for all of issue #6." He won't, except for a panel, or two, appear in that issue, and will be without the fusion suit in #4-5. McKeever is mysteriously reticent when quizzed about the plot, revealing only that it is just as important an issue as any other in the series.

All of the book's cast will have been introduced by #5, including the mothers who are, as much as anybody can be said to be, the villains of the piece. They plan to unleash a world enveloping ray at six o'clock in the morning that will turn everyone into fine, upright Pat Boone clones (well, okay, so maybe those weren't his *exact* words), a plan Eddy makes it his mission to thwart. That same morning hour, though, is the time he has to be back at the asylum if his night's freedom is to remain undiscovered. His decision—whether to fight or return—becomes the pivot upon which not only the book's ending, but the more important matter of Eddy's shattered sanity turns.

As an aside, you might want to make sure you pick up *Grimjack* sometime around January, when the "Munden's Bar" backup will feature Eddy. It falls in his chronology just after he left the destroyed theatre that had been showing an Elvis movie. Strangely, the backup story will have him taking on an Elvis impersonator. "For a person I don't like, I know more about Presley than I do about most people I *do* like. I don't know how that works."

When asked about the absence of a mature readers label on the second issue, McKeever says, "It's kind of odd, but it's due to the fact the mothers in the book are the villains and they stress censorship and labeling. It just didn't fit, so I discussed it with Jan and he said, 'Well, what do you feel?' I said that I didn't care as long as I wouldn't be restricted either way. If it had the label and I could say and do whatever I wanted to, that's fine, and if it doesn't have the label and I could still do the same thing, then let's leave it off. It just didn't fit, so there won't be any label on it." Another spur to his decision was Harlan Ellison's antipathy to labeling on Mad Dog's adaptation of *Vic and Blood*. Chances are, then, that you won't find one on any Mad Dog title. —EV—

From **Elementals** *#22, the televangelist satire*

ELEMENTALS

Written by BILL WILLINGHAM, JACK HERMAN, and LAWRENCE SCHICK; illustrated by BILL WILLINGHAM, JILL THOMPSON, and MIKE CHEN; inked by KEITH WILSON; edited by MAGGIE BRENNER

32 four-color pages, $1.50; newsstand distribution; monthly from COMICO

Chrysalis returns to plague our dead heroes in #21's story, which is named after her. The young female scientist on Nacht Island, whose body and mind were taken over by the Chrysalis armor, is trying to reunite the Destroyers, Saker's band of evil bad guys. When she takes the Elementals' butler, Lawrence, hostage, she demands the return of Annihilator, Behemoth, and Electrocutioner. The Elementals face the Destroyers again, for a showdown in Gas Works Park, in this story written and pencilled by Bill Willingham.

Satirizing televangelists, Willingham's plot in issue #22's "The Book of Creation," concerns a TV preacher who makes Jim Bakker look like a Sunday School teacher. The Jeremy Skaggs Ministries' recruits become subjects in a "clinical discourse on the subject of murder," or in other words, "1200 ways to kill a man slowly." Meanwhile, the Elementals are still facing their final confrontation with Chrysalis. Pencils this issue are by Bill Willingham, with script by Jack Herman.

In #23's "Mad Gods and Englishmen," Jill Thompson returns to guest-pencil the book over a Bill Willingham story. Watching the Elementals on TV in Asgard, a very bored Thor decides to go have some fun. Unfortunately for the team, his idea of fun is a good, rousing fight! This is promised to be a light-hearted look at the Elementals.

Lawrence Schick writes, and Jill Thompson draws issue #24's "The Shining Path." The Elementals are summoned by ancient magic to Peru by a group of rebels, to help in their fight against a "ruthless, oppressive government (sound familiar?)." The Rebels are called "The Sendero Luminoso," or "The Shining Path." Problems arise when an ancient Incan god, Supai, is summoned as well, and does not get along with the Elementals. In fact, he wants to kill them!

Although it's a little late for the season, issue #25 will be entitled "Devil's Night," a story about the night before Halloween. This issue is from a Jack Herman story, and is pencilled by Jill Thompson. It's Devil's Night in Detroit, and all hell is breaking loose. In the midst of the melee is the arsonist who killed Jeanette (Morningstar), and she's out for blood.

A Vortex solo story will appear in #26, called "Special Forces," from a Jack Herman story with pencils by Mike Chen. A KGB agent from Vortex's Viet Nam days is on the loose, and Admiral Norland calls in Vortex to rescue an oil tanker, and to find Rakshasa, the KGB agent. The story will show some of Vortex's early days in Viet Nam.

Contrary to the last *Preview Special*'s reports, the *Elementals* will not be cancelled with issue #27, and no end is in sight. Issue #27 is called "My Little Runaway" by Jack Herman, Jill Thompson, and new/old inker Bill Anderson. Issue #28 is called "Wasted and Contaminated," by the same team from #27. The possible *Ratman Special* has not been

scheduled, and creator Bill Willingham may not do the Special after all. —AM—

ELF WARRIOR

Written by DAN GREENBERG; art and covers by PETER HSU

32 black-and-white pages, $1.95; quarterly from ADVENTURE PUBLICATIONS

Elf Warrior is the gory tale of a nearly extinct race of Elves and their struggle to survive in a hostile land of dark sorceries. Stormcrest, commander of the Woodland Guard, leads a desperate assault on the Tower of Blades to find thesource of Darkos's power. Darkos is a twisted evil sorcerer who has assembled an army of Skulkers to conquer and enslave the land.

According to writer Dan Greenbert, upcoming issues of *Elf Warrior* will boast a "spectacular showdown of necromantic magic and Elvin nobility."

Stormcrest must contend with many personal burdens and consequences on this mission. First, he disobeyed Greyoak, the Elven King, in making a pact with Prince Redhawk and the human army, traditional enemies to elves. Second, he must also ensure guilt and responsibility for the Elven warriors that die on this mission. And finally, Stormcrest must opt to use his ancestral blade, risking the loss of his soul and the wrath of his ancestors.

These conflicts, all contradictory to the Elvin code of honor are all overshadowed by Stormcrest's passionate desire to ensure the survival of his race and to do what is ultimately put ironically honorable.

According to writer Dan Greenberg, "I wanted to show Stormcrest as a heroic figure also doomed from the start. He has to fight the enemy and the limits of his own people. He takes responsibility for his species at unbelievable personal loss."

In writing *Elf Warrior*, Dan Greenberg said he tried to include as many plot elements as he could. Indeed, the Elves will reach the source, the heart and only vulnerability of Darkos! Stormcrest rallies the Skulkers to betray Darkos and join the Woodland Guard and Prince Redhawk's army. Darkos is forced to abandon the battle on the weeping Plains and return to the Tower of Blades for a final clash! Stormcrest and Blackscar have a final conflict and return to their King together, a life of exile awaits them.

ELFLORD

Written and illustrated by BARRY BLAIR; edited by MIKE CHARBONNEAU

32 four-color pages, $2.00; monthly from AIRCEL PUBLISHING

The history of *Elflord* begins in the Elfworld when the White-Haired Eleves came—nearly destroying the Elvin Empire with their magic. Twelve Elfheimbanes were bred and assigned to protect the twelve surviving White-Haired Eleves and to hold their powers in check generation after generation. Windblade Greensleeve and Elfheimbane Hawk Erickson, the protagonists of this series, are one such pair.

Now that Hawk and Windblade and their band of outcasts have destroyed the evil witch Cloudshadow, they have returned to the decadent and desolate Shadow Market—the underworld of Greenhaven.

They have resolved, nay, *vowed* to return the rule of Greenhaven to its peaceable folk. This means they must overthrow the queen, Tiang. Unfortunately, there are others interested in assuming rulership of Greenhaven. To wit: the Cardinal, an already powerful figure, and the Overlord, an entity trapped between worlds, who seeks to conquer all of Elfworld (among others).

Into this smolderingly dangerous situation come Hawk, Windblade and friends.

As we join our heroes in issue #16, an uneasy alliance has been formed by the Overlord and the Cardinal (each attempting to use the other to facilitate his own rise to power). In the streets of the Shadow Market, the Cardinal's Shades kill a member of the Elflord's band.

By issue #17 a plot has been put in motion to assassinate Queen Tiang, as several factions battle for the Crown. And in issue #18 some very surprising contestants for the crown make their presence felt.

As this storyline progresses, the story will be split into three titles. In January, in an experimental tale, the Falcon will be featured in a one-shot (tentatively titled *The Falcon Special*). Then, from March to May of '88, *The Greenhaven Special* will appear as a three-issue mini-series.

These specials will enable Barry Blair to tell an epic that might have run through most of 1988, in half the time and also give us a good look at some characters that haven't really been explored in the main title as yet.

Following the specials, the storyline will tie back together and be resolved in *Elflord*. —SW—

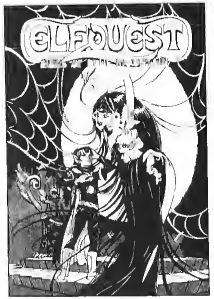
If you like elves being massecred, Elf Warrior is the comic for you!

ELFQUEST: SIEGE AT BLUE MOUNTAIN

Written by WENDY and RICHARD PINI; pencilled by WENDY PINI; inked by JOE STATON; edited by RICHARD PINI

8-issue series; 32 black-and-white pages; $1.75; bi-monthly from APPLE COMICS

Since certain difficulties prevented many of the previously announced Apple books from appearing, not much about this book has changed since now and the previous *Preview Special*. There will still be a major confrontation between Winnowill and Rayek, the secret of Two-Edge will still be revealed, there will be a major turning point in the relationship between Wolfrider and the humans, and there will still be a thrilling, exciting, never-before-seen bombastic two-issue battle, during which the secret behind Blue Mountain is revealed. And I don't mean the brand of dog food. —ARC—



Cover to Elfquest.

ELRIC: THE BANE OF THE BLACK SWORD

Adapted by ROY THOMAS; illustrated by a player to be named later; edited by LAUREL FITCH

32 full-color pages; $1.75; bi-monthly from FIRST COMICS

In February, Roy Thomas, Jan Duursema, and Nicholas Koenig finish off #6 of *The Vanishing Tower*, in which all the Champions Eternal get together and the Vanishing Tower by golly vanishes. April will see the first issue of *Bane of the Black Sword*, in which the little bleeder has the nerve to go back to Melnibone to borrow some dragons for his showdown with Theleb K'arna. Then he goes and finds himself a girl who he's not related to, which, given his condition, would not have been a bad idea to begin with. —RF—

ELVIRA, MISTRESS OF THE DARK

Written by SID JACOBSON; pencilled by ERNIE COLON; edited by SID JACOBSON

one-shot; 48 black-and-white page magazine; newsstand distribution; from MARVEL COMICS GROUP

Adapting the upcoming New World Pictures feature film starring the popular Mistress of the Macabre, Elvira. Bad never looked so good!

EMPIRE

Written by PAUL RYAN O'CONNOR; illustrated by JOHN GALLAGHER and MIKE CHRISTIAN

32 black-and-white pages; $1.95; monthly from ETERNITY COMICS

In the year 3147, 14-year-old Morgan II ("The grandson of a King and an ancestor of the devil himself!"), together with his friend Beckett, is attempting an ill-fated invasion of Albion. After heavy losses in a series of bloody battles and despite the aid of mercenaries, they are beaten back and must retreat. Welcome to one of the worlds of *Empire*, the new monthly science-fiction series debuting in March from Eternity.

Mankind has spread to the stars, and long ago left behind his Homeworld birthplace. This is the time of empires, and the Burgundian Worlds form the greatest empire of all controlling an entire arm of the galaxy, with the worlds of Anjou, Aquitane, and Burgundy its greatest capitals. Against the Burgundian Worlds stands Albion, a fiercely independent world in the grip of an inept usurper.

Morgan II is the son of Morgan I's daughter Matilda by Blackstone, King of Anjou. As the story opens, civil war rages between Anjou and Albion as Matilda seeks to rescue her father's throne from her cousin, King Stephen.

"It's very loosely based on King Henry II of England," creator Paul Ryan O'Connor said. "As one of England's most colorful monarchs, his reign was marked by continuous warfare, bloodshed, treachery, and deceit. And I've transplanted a number of those elements to the future." Helping in the transplantation will be artists John Gallagher (whose work can also be seen in Eternity's *Bloodwing*) and Mike Christian.

Empire #1 will ship late February for sale in March.

EMPIRE LANES

Written by PETER GROSS; pencilled by PETER GROSS; inked by ELAINE KAJIWARA

24 black-and-white pages; $1.75; eight times a year; from NORTHERN LIGHTS

Writer Peter Gross began his chat with us by stating that good comics defy description, but said that he would attempt to give us a run-down of what we could expect to see in *Empire Lanes* in the next six months. Issue #4, due out by Christmas, will feature the aftermath of the companions' battle with the Guild sorcerers and will begin to show how they begin to adapt to life in Chicago. They will move into the bowling alley. "I want to spend some time developing the characterization and interplay between them," Gross told us.

In issue #5, the Priest goes to a Blues Bar, gets drunk and learns the meaning of the Blues. Renfield releases a spell he stole from the sorcerer, and a couple more assassins will pop up to harass our heroes. "I'm writing each issue of this series like a chapter in a novel," Gross told us. "So the pacing is nothing like it would be in a 'normal' comic." He went on to state that he wanted to reveal the various characters through their own actions, rather than waste space explaining about them. Thus there will be more characterization than action in the book. "Think of it as a play as opposed to a movie."

In issue #6 they will head uptown, and attempt to seek out corporate sponsorship in their quest to return to their

A pencilled panel from Empire, coming from Eternity Comics.

homeworld. They will also re-open the ally for business, and there will be more people after them. In the distant future, Gross said he would like to include some back up material with work by different artists, but the details of this were not quite worked out at this writing. —RS—

ENCHANTERS

Written by DON CHIN, illustrated by MIKE DRINGENBERG, edited by FRED BURKE

6-issue mini-series; 32 four-color pages; $2.00; bi-monthly from Eclipse Comics

It goes like this: "*Enchanters* is more than an elfin fantasy; it is a suspense-filled story on an epic level." The mini-series' protagonists are Our Hero, Markishim, the villain (and Our Hero's father), Xantham, Cecemuir, a powerful magician, and Cub, Cecemuir's first real friend. To this case is added Taya, described by editor Fred Burke as "a healer, soldier and thief," who is destined to form part of a love-triangle with Cecemuir and Cub!

Without giving much away, Burke went on to reveal the following:

Events will lead to a point at which time Cecemuir and Xantham will clash head on, and Our Hero will assume a more important role towards the conclusion of the series. The latter will do so alongside another new character named Adine. She is the leader of Xantham's mercenary forces, and editor Fred says, "she's a very powerful soldier!"

That's all I can tell you, patchy as it is. However, Burke did add that he thinks writer Don Chin and artist Steve Dringenberg are "doing a really good job in actually creating a novel," which is how he considers the eight issues in their collective entirety. In retrospect, then, you should be able to view the individual issues more distinctly in their contribution to the whole. —PC—

ENEMY LINES

Written, illustrated and edited by TOMMY A. PONS

32 four-color pages; $1.75; quarterly from T.A.P. PRODUCTIONS

The second *Enemy Lines* sees Mifnar and Draphnewt's rescue from the caravan that had captured them in the first issue. Their delivery comes at the hands of a group of kids, the Brood, who are disenchanted with Anarus Mithon's rule of Adalta. The former captives relief, though, may be shortlived. They must convince the Brood's leader not only that they are not enemies, but that their mission to rescue Emperor Allonkgar's son is worthy of aid. Meanwhile, Anarus Mithon receives word with surprisingly accurate news of Mifnar and Draphnewt's identities and plans.

"So they're just going to get thrashed again," says Pons, revealing that the heroes will be recaptured in the third issue. Back in Andelphus, capital of Noverca, several members of Allonkgar's council are plotting against him.

Mark Medellin is contributing an eight-page backup to #3, and a shorter one to the next. "It's a really, really bizarre story he's come up with," says Pons, "but he won't tell me what it is. I told him that as long as there were no robots, barbarians or ninjas in it—then I would put it in the book."

John Nordland II had an unsolicited testimonial for Pons' work when I called for his phone number. "His figure drawing ability is increasing by leaps and bounds," he said. —TV—

Equine does his best Prince Valiant impression.

EQUINE THE UNCIVILIZED

Written by RICHARD KONKLE, pencilled by MARK WALLACE, inked by PHIL MORRISSEY, edited by JIM GROAT

32 black-and-white pages; $2.00; quarterly from GRAPHXPRESS

Equine, like Dave Sim's *Cerebus*, started out as a funny-animal parody of Conan and has gone his own way since. Groat and Konkle believe in throwing in a dramatic story from time to time as a change of pace, and to set up a new foundation of seriousness which can be milked for humor for the next several issues. The last one was issue #4, in which Equine and Princess Penelope were attacked by wasteland bandits and Equine was wounded by a poisoned arrow. In #5, Equine died but his body was immediately inhabited by the spirit of an orangutan sorcerer, Larry, an irrepressible practical joker who was fleeing his irate victims—while Equine's displaced psyche ended up in Larry's body. So Equine spent issues #5 and #6 as a bewildered orangutan forced to deal with Larry's victims, while Larry (as Equine) had more fun and ruined Equine's reputation with his Ork friends in the process.

The two *Equine* issues scheduled for the first half of 1988 are #7 and #8. Richard Konkle describes #7: "Memories and Bygones," as:

"The Orks are mad enough to chew tar, and Equine's their target! Fortunately for our hero, the wizard Molar Khan appears—looking for his arch enemy, the wizard Larry! Not finding him in Equine's body, the arcane hippo teleports away, leaving the Orks completely confused.

"To escape the ambivalent Orks for a time, Equine goes for a walk. The still-orange Penelope follows close behind. Seeing her barbarian acting 'normally' once again, she tries to attract his attentions. Whenever she gets close, however, Equine pulls away! (Part of the problem being that Penelope's orange hair reminds Equine of his night (shudder) with Simone, the orangutan!)

"Most of #7 is devoted to flashbacks to Equine's childhood and youth as a teenage barbarian, which he relates to distract Penelope from her amorous advances as they stroll about. The flashbacks are all played for laughs, of course.

"Konkle resumes: 'Equine's reminiscings are cut off, however, when he and Penelope witness a dead Ork scout being brought back to camp. We soon learn that others have died, too . . . gathering information on a possible Sheepaheim invasion of the northern nomad lands. Equine is then 'volunteered' to go to the border city of Felgerkarb to spy for the Orks. Equine agrees, to clear the air with the Orks, and to simply get away for awhile. Penelope, of course, goes with our hero.

"In Felgerkarb in *Equine #8*: 'Close Encounters of the Red Kind,' Equine and Penelope run into a couple of Equine's old friends, Boar and Magdolla—and Red Shetland, the 'She Stallion With a Sword!' Red harasses Equine into a competition of strength, skill, and intestinal fortitude! If Equine wins, the She Stallion is his . . . and yet, for the first time in his life, he wants to lose! Can he? And if he can't, can Princess Penelope forgive him?" —PP—

ESCAPE

Written and drawn by various, edited by PAUL GRAVETT and PETER STANBURY

64 four-color pages; $4.95; monthly from TITAN BOOKS

Over the coming months there will be a distinctly international flavor to *Escape*, with issues devoted to New York, Paris, and Russia, but the first publication of the new year, #12, is themeless.

An animation cel cover of Sylvester and Tweety Pie ties in with an article exploring the links between animation and comics, and the foreign contribution for the issue is from Dutch cartoonist Joost Swarte. Other strips are by John Bagnall, Ed Pinsent, Brian Bolland, and John Watson, and also published is a four-page story written by Spencer Woodcock and illustrated by Denny Derbyshire concerning Woodcock's experiences and observations while harvesting the coffee crop in Nicaragua this year.

Escape #13 is the New York issue, with a cover by Charles Burns of his El Borbah character. The New York atmosphere pervades the entire issue, and editor Gravett promises contributions by or about celebrated New York artists Will Eisner, art spiegelman, Jerry Moriarty, Mark Marek, and Gary Panter. Also included are honorary New Yorkers Jaques Tardi, Dave McKean, Brian Bolland, Warren Pleece and John Bagnall. "It's not so much about New York factually," says Gravett, "but more what the artists think about New York."

Issues #14 and 15 remain uncertain beyond that one will be the Paris issue for which a guide is planned, and the other will be the Russian issue. Gravett promises an indepth look at Russians in comics for the latter, "including everything from Octobriana to the Red Ghost," and strips by Jim Woodring and Russian born illustrator Artzy Basheff, now a resident and renowned in the USA. He hopes to run pages from *Tintin in the Land of the Soviets* never previously translated into English. —PP—

ESPERS

Written by JAMES D. HUDNALL, illustrated by JOHN M. BURNS

32 four-color pages; $1.75; monthly from ECLIPSE COMICS

Due to several contractual problems, *ESPers* is currently on hiatus, until they can be resolved. If Eclipse does continue to publish the book, they will finish off the "Liquidators" storyline begun in issue #5. That story would end with issue #8, at which point *ESPers* is currently being contracted for by another company. If, however, Eclipse does not continue to publish the book, it will immediately revert to the other company. —AM—

ETERNITY SMITH

Written by DENNIS MALLONEE, pencilled by RICK HOBERG, inked by AARON McCLELLAN, edited by DENNIS MALLONEE

32 four-color pages; $1.95; bi-monthly from HERO COMICS

Issues #6-7 conclude the four-part Antarctic horror sequence, with a full-length *Eternity Smith* adventure in issue

From here to **Eternity Smith**.

#7. Annie and Boomer star in the backup story in issue #6, in a chilling murder mystery that introduces a villain who will soon play a major role in the saga of Eternity Smith.

In issue #8, a new member joins Skylark's Crew, and Tesseract returns for what could prove to be her final confrontation with Smith. The question left dangling at the end of the Renegade press mini-series will be answered: Is Tesseract in fact a *future* version of Skylark? Also in issue #7, a new back-up feature is introduced: *Indigo*, by Mallonee, Hoberg and Tim Burgard.

Star Trek fans should be alert for a special treat. In issue #9, Walter Koenig fights alongside Smith and Skylark to protect an important component of the Space Shuttle from falling into the wrong hands.

EVANGELINE

Written by CHUCK DIXON, pencilled by CARA SHERMAN TERENO, inked by RICARDO VILLAGRAN, edited by LAUREL FIRCH

32 four-color pages; $1.25; bi-monthly from FIRST COMICS

"*Evangeline* in 1988 will feature an extended storyline entitled, 'The Hostage Planet,'" says writer Chuck Dixon, "which brings Jonny Six back to the story for a long while." Evangeline's opposite member, Pristine, a new recurring villainess, will be introduced. Joseph, an evil artificial intelligence, will be showing up. "Mostly," continues Dixon, "we will be seeing more and more of Evangeline's origin." He also adds that the book will examine the Catholic Church of the future, the opposition they are up against as mankind expands to the stars. Brother Philip's role in the book will be greatly expanded as well. "He's a creepy character," says Dixon, who also promises that more will be learned about Brian Hagen, the Australian mercenary. The series will also be moving out into space. —RS—

EVERYTHING'S ARCHIE

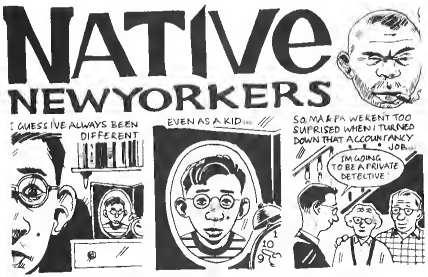
Written and drawn by various, edited by VICTOR GORELICK

32 four-color pages; 75 cents; newsstand distribution; bi-monthly from ARCHIE COMICS

Archie Andrews, who currently holds the distinction of appearing in more issues per year than any other character in American comics, makes a half-dozen of those appearances in this title. Other than a novelty strip in the middle, depicting the Archie characters as cavemen, there isn't much to distinguish this comic from the rest of the line.

For 1988, expect a continuation of the traditional clean cut kid values that have characterized the entire line since its inception.

Check the listing for *Archie* for a list of writers and artists whose work will appear in this title. —DM—



From the "New York" issue of **Escape**, *#13, by Warren Pleece*

Hip humor from the Archie gang

EX-MUTANTS

Written by PAUL RYAN O'CONNOR, illustrated by URIEL ANTONIO, CELIM CATON, and JIMMY PALMIOTTI

40 black-and-white pages $1.95 monthly from ETERNITY COMICS

The ***Ex-Mutants***—featuring Erin, Belushi, Angela, Vikki, and Loralei—is set to begin again. In order to clean up the mess of having three publishers in 22 months, Eternity will be wiping the slate clean and starting over again in March with ***Ex-Mutants*** Vol 2 #1 with a brand-new full-color cover by ***Ex-Mutants*** creator Ron Lim and new art team, Uriel Antonio and Celim Caton.

Are the Ex-Mutants really dead? ***Ex-Mutants #8*** closed the curtain on the first act of their saga. "Their mentor, Doc Cugat, the man who turned them from mutants to humans through genetic experimentation, has betrayed them," writer O'Connor revealed about this top secret project. "When last we saw the Ex-Mutants, they were reduced to their component atoms and scattered all over New York by Cugat. Or so we were led to think."

When pressed for details, O'Connor grudgingly admitted that the cataclysmic events in #8 did occur—it wasn't a dream. "I'll be reprising the past gradually. Many mysteries will be revealed and more introduced. The book will take a more mature direction, more in keeping with the tone of the first issue, with a few curveballs thrown in. Long-standing fans of the series will not be disappointed, and new readers will get a chance to jump right in from the beginning."

"Ron Lim is a tough act to follow," said artist Uriel Antonio, who is also the illustrator for Eternity's ***Starlight***. "But I'll give it my best shot. I enjoy drawing all of the characters, especially Erin. And in keeping with the new look for the book I've redesigned some of their costumes to make them even sexier."

"I'm really excited about ***Ex-Mutants #2***," series co-creator Ron Lim said. "I really love Uriel's art—his figure work is excellent! Now that ***Ex-Mutants*** is at one stable publisher with high standards and regular scheduling, I only wish I had time to do more than guest covers!" Lim is currently pencilling ***The Badger*** for First Comics.

But are the Ex-Mutants really dead? "Read the first issue and find out," advises O'Connor, "I've been sworn to secrecy by my editors."

Ex-Mutants #1 The New Beginning ships in March from Eternity Comics. Eternity will also be releasing the ***Ex-Mutants*** graphic novel, ***Volume One: The Saga Begins***, in January. The book collects for the first time the first three issues of the original ***Ex-Mutants***, "including the material that was added for the ***Ex-Mutants #1*** second printing," according to Eternity Editor-in-chief Chris Ulm. Ron Lim and Jimmy Palmiotti provide a new full color wraparound cover. The 96-page volume retails for $5.95.

January will also see the beginning of ***Solo Ex-Mutants*** which will star various members of the Ex-Mutants cast in complete-in-one-issue adventures. First up is Erin, "easily the most popular of the Ex-Mutants," Ulm said. The first issue is illustrated by Ron Lim and Tim Dzon. The second issue is a pirate adventure scripted by Jonathan Grove and starring Vikki and Douglas as a pair of hapless swashbucklers. Jack Snider and Jimmy Palmiotti will illustrate. The third issue focuses on Angela, "the least used and least understood of the Ex-Mutants," Ulm said. "She'll have made a temporary break from the team, and will necounter Lt. Lance Burton and his

The Ex-Mutants have found their final home: Eternity/Malibu

A pencilled page from Chris Claremont and Alan Davis's new **Excalibur**

mutant-eating dog, Roscoe 1." Jonathan Grove scripts and the artist as yet is unsigned. All *Solo Ex-Mutants* titles will be 40 pages, with no increase in price.

Also coming in January is the full-color 40-page *Ex-Mutants Pin-Up Book*. The book will feature 20 full-color 10x13 inch pull-out posters, suitable for framing. Ron Lim and Uriel Antonio are the artists.

EXCALIBUR

Written by CHRIS CLAREMONT; penciled by ALAN DAVIS; inked by PAUL NEARY; edited by ANN NOCENTI

32 four-color pages; $1.00; newsstand distribution; monthly from MARVEL COMICS

Following their introduction in the *Excalibur* bookshelf special, the new team (Capt. Britain, Shadowcat, Nightcrawler, Phoenix, and Meggan) gain a bizarre new member—Widgit—and continue to uphold Prof. Xavier's original mission for the X-Men (presumed dead after the end of the "Fall of the Mutants").

The team sets up headquarters in Captain's light-house, and old friends (and foes) enter the scene. The adventures will take the flavor of a cosmic comedy set across the multiverse.

FABULOUS FURRY FREAK BROTHERS

Written and illustrated by GILBERT SHELTON and PAUL MAVRIDES

32 full-color pages; $2.00; from RIP OFF PRESS (Mature Readers)

They still publishin' this? You better believe it! Freddy, Franklin, and Phineas continue to uphold the rights of high-wheeling, with liberal dollops of politics, satire, and good old-fashioned pratfalls along the way. *FFFB #11* should be out sometime during the first part of the year.

Also due in '88 is the European album of the collected "The Idiots Abroad" epic, a 90-page full-color magnum opus about our boys' adventures to Columbia. That was the story in issues #8-10, so the aforementioned #11 should be starting a whole new storyline. —KD—

THE FALCON SPECIAL

Written and illustrated by BARRY BLAIR; edited by MIKE CHARBONNEAU

one-shot; 24 color and black-and-white pages; $2.00; from AIRCEL PUBLISHING

The Falcon character has become very popular of late and so, as part of an effort to explore some of the less well developed characters in *Elflord*, he has been given this special.

Creator Blair says that he has tried something different with the *Falcon Special*. "It was suggested to me that it might be interesting to use both color and black-and-white in telling a comics story. I took the idea and combined it with an idea I had for an adventure that spotlights the Falcon character as part of his effort to overthrow Queen Tiang and help Hawk and windblade in *Elflord*."

The basic plotline of *The Falcon Special* is simple: following a battle in the Crown War, Falcon is being chased by the Cardinal's soldiers. He takes to the sewers under the city, where he meets a character named Grimble. Grimble is a bit of a packrat and something of a Dickensian street thief.

The feel is both gothic and Dickensian throughout, says Blair.

The experimentation in coloring comes about as follows: when in a shaft of light from the surface, or on the surface itself, the story will take place in color. In the sewers, and in poor light, the black-and-white will predominate. "The idea is that as Falcon moves into the sewers, and gets further from good light, the color will gently wash out of the art. As he nears good light, the colors will fade back in. The whole effect promises to be so subtle that it will not even be discernible unless you consciously watch for it," enthuses Blair.

As mentioned in the *Elflord* preview, this title is but one part of the story being told in *Elflord* and in *The Greyhaven Special*. —SW—

FALLEN ANGELS

Written by JO DUFFY; penciled by COLLEEN DORAN; inker and editor undetermined

6-issue limited series; 48 full-color pages; "bookshelf format"; price undetermined; monthly from MARVEL COMICS GROUP

Yes, folks, the *Fallen Angels*, that magical gathering of outcasts from various places and times, will rise again this year. While a firm release date for the series has not been set as yet, writer Jo Duffy said that a "late spring" release looked promising.

As you may have expected, there will be some changes in the book's look this timeout. For openers, it will be presented in the "bookshelf format" seen previously in the recently-completed *Blood: A Tale*. (C'mon, now, do we really *have* to call it the "Dark Knight" format?) Also, at least three of last year's Fallen Angels will be absent this time around. Sunspot and Warlock are back with the New Mutants, and Boom Boom will be returning to *X-Factor*. Duffy also reported that Siryn will be leaving after the first issue.

The rest of the cast from last time, however, will be there with bells on, ready to welcome a brand new member! Duffy chose not to discuss the new Angel as yet, preferring to let readers be surprised—an attitude she also took towards describing the "major new villain" to be introduced in this series. She did, however, emphasize the word "major," adding that both Chris Claremont and Louise Simonson had expressed interest in the new baddie.

Explaining that "not much" of the series has actually been approved by Marvel, yet, Duffy did go on to say that the new series is intended to spark "a series of limited series," a la DC's *Amethyst*, and that the remaining cast members from last time would continue to grow as characters in this and succeeding stories. Confrontations with other denizens of the Marvel universe are "likely" during this and future runs, but again, Duffy chose not to name names, allowing the readers to be surprised and "tantalized." Not to worry, though, info fans: with a "late spring" release, chances are that the series will still be running in time for the next *Preview Special*. We can spill the beans then. —DP—

FANTASCI

Written and illustrated by VARIOUS; edited by RICHARD PINI

32 black-and-white pages; $1.75; bi-monthly from APPLE COMICS

Because only one issue of *Fantasci* has appeared since the writing of the last *Preview Special*, things are pretty much the same as they were last time. "Hunter-XX" by Mark Stadler and Dave Hoover

Captain Obese throws his weight around in Fantasci—maybe he can get it to come out on time, too?

concludes in #7. Issue #8 presents "Exodus on Dabel 3" by Brian Buniak and Steve Clement. Thereafter the remaining two strips—"Captain Obese" by Don Lomax and "A Hero Named Harold" by Steve Stirling and Kevin Davies—will be 14 pages. The title concludes its run with issue #10.

A general observation that may be of some interest to folks: Mike Catron of Apple Comics notes that William Messner-Loebs, of *Journey* and *Jonny Quest* fame, will contribute ten one-pagers comprising the series *Garden Times* for the next ten months in Apple Comics. The strip will appear in some of the books each month, and will jump around in various Apple books. It contains a growing plant and its erotic encounters with the soil, among other things. Catron has been particularly impressed by the depth of expression Messner-Loebs is able to get from just a few lines, defineating a plant which doesn't even have a face. Definitely something to watch out for. —ABC—

THE FANTASTIC FOUR

Written by STEVE ENGLEHART; penciled by KEITH POLLARD; inked by JOE SINNOTT; edited by RALPH MACCHIO

32 four-color pages; 75 cents; newsstand distribution; monthly from MARVEL COMICS GROUP

Since coming on board as the scripter for the *Fantastic Four*, Steve Englehart has: kicked out Mr. Fantastic and the Invisible Woman, added Crystal and Ms. Marvel to the group, and mutated Ms. Marvel into a female version of the Thing. In the midst of mounting fandom apprehension, Englehart wishes to assure his audience that he *does* have a firm goal in mind with all of these events, and to ask everyone to please bear with him. Despite how it looks, he has *not* lost his mind. We think.

At any rate, over the coming months, the "new" Ms. Marvel will come to terms with her new appearance, which is good since she's going to look that way for quite a while before finally reverting to her human appearance. Another plot-line that will be bubbling under the surface over the next year will be the ongoing war between Dr. Doom and Kristoff, in which both will seek allies to pit against each other, such as the Black Panther, whom Englehart claims will "be more visible in this book than he has been lately." The storyline should finally wind up sometime in 1989, when, according to Englehart, World War III will begin ... in the Balkans. And, lest we forget: the tensions between Crystal, the Human Torch, and Alicia will continue to increase, since there are, after all, strong feelings between Johnny Storm and Crystal that just won't stay buried.

As noted above, however, these are all plotlines that will be bubbling under the main action in the book. And just what will be that main action? Why, a good, old-fashioned space epic, of course! Englehart preferred to hedge his bets on how many issues it would run, but did mention what the epic would include: the return of the Comet Man, of limited series fame, an appearance by Master Pandemonium, from *West Coast Avengers*, the return of Molecule

The Thing remains lumpy in FF.

Man, and most significantly (wait for it) the return of ... *The Beyonder*. We repeat: Englehart has not lost his mind. We think.

Finally, last time out we "predicted" that Mr. Fantastic and the Invisible Woman would make their return at about this time. Well, those plans have been somewhat changed, and while there is a point coming up wherein they could return ... or in Englehart's words, might *have* to ... it seems pretty definite that they won't be back full-time for the foreseeable future. —DP—

FEAR IS HELL

Written and illustrated by VARIOUS; edited by TIM CORRIGAN

24 black-and-white pages; $1.50; annually from C&T GRAPHICS

Although predominantly dedicated to prose horror fiction, this issue will feature comics work by Tim Corrigan, Willie Blyberg, and Gene Day. The series is projected as an annual endeavor.

FELIX THE CAT

Written by LAURA HITCHCOCK; penciled by HOWARD POST; edited by BOB BUDIANSKY

one-shot; 48 four-color pages; $1.50; newsstand distribution; from MARVEL COMICS GROUP

Adapting the legendary cartoon character in his upcoming feature-length animated motion picture.

THE FINAL CYCLE

Written by MARK CLEGG & CHARLIE BOATNER; penciled by CHUCK AUSTEN, then DARYL SKELTON; inked by BASILIO AMARO; covers by FRANK CIROCCO

4-issue series; 32 black-and-white pages; $1.75; monthly from DRAGON'S TEETH

I'm sure you all read the Frank Cirocco and Mark Clegg interviews in *Amazing Heroes #125* that Kevin Dooley did, but for those who have forgotten:

The full name of this book is actually *The Final Cycle: Part One*, which may seem to you like a contradiction, but what it actually is is a series of mini-series chronicling the adventures of two pairs of people (sort of). The first adventure concerns Mantano and Yong, a young, idealistic human and an alien (actually part alien, part human) Grull, who witnessed an extermination of Yong's people. The second is of a woman with a radical split personality: she's the young, innocent Cecilia and the powerful Ishtra. Both stories will have a definite beginning, middle and end, as will each mini-series, Clegg said in the aforementioned interview, and will merge in the third mini-series where it all comes together.

Frank Cirocco did all four covers. Chuck Austen of *Hero Sandwich* fame will pencil up until issue #3 and then Daryl Skelton will pencil #4, with Basilio Amaro inking them all. No creative team is decided for the second mini-series which, Clegg said, should go into production this summer. —KD—

THE FINAL MAN

Written by TIM CORRIGAN; illustrated by RUSS MAHERAS; edited by TIM CORRIGAN

24 black-and-white pages; $1.50; bi-monthly from C&T GRAPHICS

Planned as at least a six-issue series, *The Final Man* is a horror/fantasy epic of sorts. Scientists seek to control the evolutionary process with terrifying results, while the world hangs on the brink of nuclear destruction. Can The Final Man save them—or is his name only too gruesomely apt? "Heroic metaphysical action and adventure" is how this one is described.

FIRESTORM

Written by JOHN OSTRANDER; penciled by JOE BROZOWSKI; inked by SAM DELAROSA; edited by DENNY O'NEIL

32 four-color pages; 75 cents; newsstand distribution; monthly from DC COMICS, INC.

Having really stirred things up during his short tenure on *Firestorm*, by giving Firestorm two new sets of personalities (among other things), writer John Ostrander plans even more changes over the next six months. As a result of the events in *Millennium*, Mikhail Arkadin, the Russian third of the Firestorm persona, has been missing for weeks in Russia. When he finally returns to his home country, he finds that his family has been taken by the KGB. In issue #69, Mikhail had visited his older brother to get his help, and was instead promised by his fifteen-year-old niece Serfina that she would see his family returned safely.

In December's issue #70, Mikhail

doesn't find out what she means, because he is captured by the KGB himself. Firestorm cannot help him, as his mind has been sucked into a temporal wormhole, and become "Time Wrecked." There he meets the "Flying Dutchman Of Time," a professor from Vandermeer University from the 60s, who is trapped in the time stream. Since Firestorm cannot escape, he cannot help Ron Raymond, who is being stalked by Stalnivok (Steel Wolf), leaving Ron's grandfather to reveal the long-held family secret. He is in fact, the Aviator (or Captain X), the Golden Age DC hero, but can he save Ron from Stalnivok? The KGB meanwhile, is about to throw Mikhail's wife out the window, if he doesn't reveal his secrets. His secret is Firestorm, but he's trapped in the time stream! Oh, woe!

Issue #71 picks up all the dangling plot threads, as well as revealing what Serfina was talking about in #69. She is the leader of the Russian teenage mutant team, Soyuz! "It is not the *X-Men* or the *New Mutants*," states writer John Ostrander emphatically. "They are mutants, and they are teenagers, but there the similarities end." Soyuz (meaning "Alliance") contains five youths, with very defined and limited powers. The members are:

Feodor is code-named Vikhor, meaning "the demon inside the whirlwind." Although his powers are gravitation-l in basis, he utilizes them to create strong wind forces. He is 16.

Igor is code-named Morozko, meaning "the ice demon." He is able to generate bitter cold within a 100-yard area, by absorbing the heat around him. He must expel the heat eventually, which gives him heat powers as well. He is 18, and very fatalistic.

Mashenka is code-named Rusalka, and is Igor's sister. She can manipulate water and water vapor up to her own body weight. Working with Feodor and Igor, she can whip up a blizzard or an ice storm, even within a closed room.

Ilya is code-named Perun, meaning "God of Thunder." He can control electricity over the span of 300 yards, but can be cancelled out by water. Unfortunately, Mashenka is his girlfriend. He is 17.

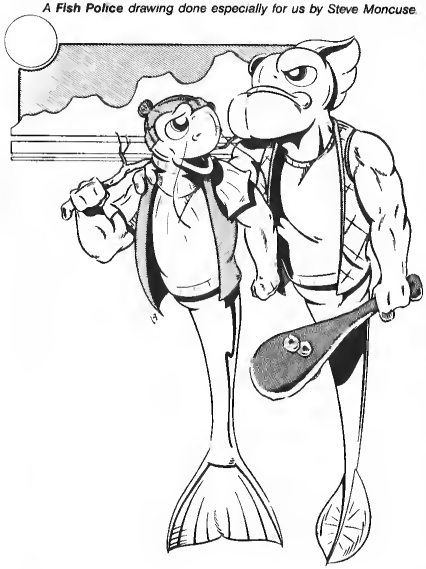
Serfina is code-named Firebird, and is the leader of the group. She has very strong telepathic abilities, and smaller empathic abilities. She is very attracted to Western society and Western culture. She is 15.

"Although they appear in #71, they do not appear in costume until issue #72," says Ostrander. "They have a very good reason for wearing masks and costumes, and using code-names. Since they are in Russia, they do not want their talents exploited by the state, nor do they want their families exposed to risk."

Firestorm escapes the time stream in issue #71, and faces Stalnikov in a "very nasty" battle, and somebody dies, because #72 opens with a funeral. Soyuz makes their first costumed appearance, much to the consternation of the KGB, and the Zuggernaut returns to get rid of Firestorm. Meanwhile, the Russian prosecutor, Soloiny, is getting too close to the truth about Mikhail for anyone's good. The story continues over into issue #73, wherein all of the plot threads left dangling from the last few issues will be resolved.

Upcoming storylines include the new Firestorm's first meeting with Firehawk, and the resolution of just exactly what the new Firestorm's personality is. Is it Martin Stein, someone else, or a completely new personality? Soyuz will continue to be used in the book, as Ostrander does not plan to bring Mikhail out of Russia. "I like the fact that Firestorm is no longer American or Russian. He is truly an international hero." Some of the original *Firestorm* villains will be returning as well, as will some of the older members of the supporting cast. —AM—

A Fish Police drawing done especially for us by Steve Moncuse.



THE FISH POLICE

Written and illustrated by STEVE MONCUSE

24 black-and-white pages, $1.50; bi-monthly from FISHWRAP PRODUCTIONS

While Hook makes his late-night, talk-show debut, Gill and the rest of the Rural Reefers stalk the television studios from one side, while Lord Tetra and the combined forces of S.H.A.R.K. and The Fish Police attack from the other.

The surprising results when the three forces clash will end the current five-part "Underground" storyline, and will begin to unravel the mystery of who Inspector Gill really is.

Stay tuned.

FIST OF GOD

Written by R.A. JONES; illustrated by BUTCH BURCHAM

4-issue mini-series, 32 black-and-white pages, $1.95; bi-monthly from ETERNITY COMICS

Author R.A. Jones and artist Butch Burcham, the creative team responsible for *Dark Wolf*, will turn their hands to pulp adventure when the four-issue mini-series *Fist of God* debuts in April from Eternity.

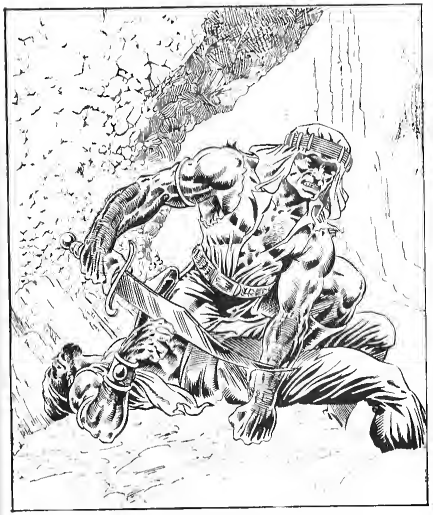
"It's an attempt to meld the raw savagery of Robert E. Howard with the more romanticized style of of Edgar Rice Burroughs," Jones said, "with just a touch of *Casablanca* thrown in for good measure."

Set in 1920, *Fist of God* will follow Mick Taggert, a rough-and-tumble streetfighter on the skids, from the streets of El Paso to the mountains of Persia ("which is now known as Iran," Jones notes). Along the way, he will encounter Mexican soldiers, Malay pirates, cut-throats and thieves, and "in keeping with pulp tradition, a beautiful woman."

The series will climax with Taggert embroiled in a struggle against a man who claims to have been resurrected from the dead in order to sit astride the fabled Peacock Throne.

Jones and Burcham promise to deliver the exoticism and all-out action adventure that characterized so many of the early pulp novels.

Fist of God #1 ships in late March.



Fist of God, from the team who brought you Dark Wolf

THE FLAME

Written by WALLY STOELTING; penciled by MARK LAMPORT; inked by KEN HOLEWCZYNSKI; edited by KEN HOLEWCZYNSKI and WALLY STOELTING

16 black-and-white pages, 95 cents, bi-monthly from 8-MOVIE COMICS

Eric Preston, the son of the original Flame, goes into Flameworld in #3. An old nemesis of his father's awaits him there, an enemy who has only grown in power over the years since the elder Preston's death.

Tarrington Stroke—a.k.a. the Master Stroke—the villain of the first two issues, returns to complicate the Flame's life in issue #4. He kidnaps one of the supporting characters who survived the earlier adventure. "The Book of Trey" will be the focus of the plot in the next issue.

FLAMING ADVENTURES

Written and illustrated by VARIOUS; edited by KEN HOLEWCZYNSKI and WALLY STOELTING

48 black-and-white pages, $2.25; bi-monthly from 8-MOVIE COMICS and (whatever name Wally Stoelting comes up with) COMICS

If you figured out that The Flame was going to be one of the three characters featured in *Flaming Adventures* then you guessed right. At 14 or 15 pages per story, his appearances here will be on a par with those in the 16-page title with his name on it. "It'll be like having a *Flame* comic coming out every month," says writer Stoelting. "The two sets of stories will be integrated, but not so much that you'd *have* to buy one book to understand the other." Holewczynski will be illustrating the first script, followed by regular *Flame* artist Mark Lamport. In his first—er, adventure Eric Preston will be tackling a pack of zombies who appear in his home town. It seems they have a mysterious connection to the Flame's past.

The Flame continues to appear in Flaming Adventures.

The first "got your nose" joke in this issue of the AHPS. Stay tuned...

Reacto-Man is the other regular in the book, fresh from his own, sadly cancelled book (but check out B-Movie's entry in the graphic novel section for more on this hero). Writing and drawing chores will be handled by Ken Holewczynski. Stories with weird villains are still the order of the day, with the return of Dr. Z in the first issue. He will have learned much in his first defeat at the hands of Reacto-Man, and will be a tougher man to beat.

The third spot will feature different heroes on a rotating basis. In the first two issues that hero will be Teykwa (literally "Big and Magnificent Bird"). He is an Amerindian engineer working in the labs at Cape Canaveral, who has developed a lightweight but durable metal for the space program. He ends up having to use his skills to become an airborne hero. His Indian heritage will have a place in the book, but writer Stoelting's desire to avoid offense has urged him to seek out an unlikely origin for Teykwa: the Pima Indians, part of whose tribe *really* disappeared from Arizona hundreds of years ago. The illustrator will be Tom Arvis.

If response is favorable enough, there is a chance of a revival for Reacto-Man or a new book for any of the new heroes ... of course. —EV—

FLAMING CARROT COMICS & STORIES

Written and drawn by BOB BURDEN

32 black-and-white pages, $1.50; bi-monthly from DARK HORSE COMICS

After a globe-scanning search that reached both the heights and depths to which the human spirit could aspire—or abhor—*Flaming Carrot* has found a new resting place—on the Dark Horse Comics solicitation form. But Bob is still the publisher. "This could have been a great opportunity to start over with a #1 again," says the ever-affable Burden, "But I really hate that Vol 2, # whatever stuff, like Charlton Comics had in the early '60s. And it hurts in the long run."

However, the changeover is not without its price. "We agreed that I should have at least three issues in the can and finished before we started printing, so we are looking at a late winter or early spring release for #18."

And when the Carrot waves again, what thrilling adventures await us?

"Issue #18 will explore what happens when Uncle Billy's mail-order bride arrives and she's a *wild jungle woman*. Flaming Carrot helps see his good friend through the trials and tribulations of outlandish romance with a sexy female Tarzan who snarls at cash registers and buries bones in the back yard.

"This issue also introduces Young Rollo, Uncle Billy's mischievous nephew."

Following this lighthearted frolic, it's back to serious matters. "Issues #19 and 20 will pick up where #17 left off, that is, with the Carrot waking up in the hammock after dreaming about the old days with The Mystery Men. The story chronicles the Carrot's vacation story at Tramp and Bronsky's house in Smallville as they hang out, go to the flea market, have fun at Carnival Island Amusement Park and take in a few drive-ins. It's the lazy days of summer and fall is in the air at night, but up in the foothills out of town, trouble is brewing in the form of a strange orgiastic cult run by mysterious visitors from another dimension who are duping docile Trekkies into bizarre rituals. Screwball also appears in this thrill-packed story."

Beyond this, Bob has many more mystery projects bubbling on the fire—ominously dropping names such as "The Pig Woman, the Buttinskys, the Cheapsters," but nothing is far enough along to announce. Indeed, the astounding truth is only now beginning to emerge: it is Bob Burden himself who has been The Carrot's most tragic victim. "I was a prisoner in my own home," he reports, gravely—food, sleep, a social life, partying—all gave way before the inexorable onslaught of the Carrot's schedule. In the future, the book will be done when it is finished, and not before.

Beyond this, Bob hopes to also collaborate with other creators on Burdenesque projects—although such collaborators must measure up to the most demanding standards. "Curt Swan on the Carrot," Bob chuckles, "Wouldn't that be great?" —HMcD—

FLASH

Written by WILLIAM MESSNER-LOEBS; pencilled by GREG LaROCQUE; inked by LARRY MAHLSTEDT; edited by BARBARA RANDALL

32 four-color pages, 75 cents, newsstand distribution; monthly from DC COMICS, INC.

Big news for *Flash* fans. A whole new creative team will be tackling the book later this year. The new writer is Bill Loebs, or *Journey* and *Jonny Quest* fame, and the new artist will is Greg LaRocque, he of *Legion of Super-Heroes* lore. The book takes on a new editorial look as well, as it now falls under the auspices of Barbara Randall.

As this is being written, Loebs has just

Flash #11: Eat or be eaten?

been announced as writer as of issue #15. "I have spoken to a number of my friends who read *The Flash*," says Loebs, "and getting their impressions about the book. Quite often I find that it differs from what the writer intended, and I have found especially with *Jonny Quest* that writing to the impressions that the readers have, has worked, and I will be using it here." Loebs says he does not intend to do a lot of changing of Mike Baron's tone, and will stay with the first person narrative which Baron has been using successfully on the book. He will also resolve as many dangling plot lines as possible, and use as many secondary characters as possible so that he gets a feel for them. He will also continue to look at the realities of life at 700 m.p.h.

New Editor Barbara Randall sees Wally West as a person who wanders through life picking up people. Prior to Loebs taking over, Mike Baron will be finishing up his last storyline on the book. Issue #11, which ended the Chunk storyline, also introduced a new group of villains called the Velocijunkies. Editor Barbara Randall describes them as yuppie-types who are hooked on a new drug called Velocity-9, which endows its user with super speed, but with the side effect of causing rapid deterioration to the body. Behind this plot, readers will discover, is a familiar face who bears a large grudge against the Flash. Also, in issue #12, the Red Trinity group will adopt a new nom-de crime, and will now be known as the Couriers. In addition, issue #14, Baron's last, will introduce one of Wally West's neighbors as a gangster, and Wally's personal life will undergo some profound, and rather "unprofitable" changes which will leave Bill Loebs plenty to work with the following issue. The art team for #12-14 is Michael Collins and Larry Mahlstedt.

Further developments will see The Flash leave the Teen Titans for good, and possibly looking to join the Justice League. Loebs will also be writing *Flash Annual* and part of the Flash tale in *Secret Origins*, which will chronicle both Barry Allen's and Wally West's story. —ES—

FLASH GORDON

Written and pencilled by DAN JURGENS; inked by BRUCE PATERSON; edited by MIKE GOLD

9-issue maxi-series; 32 full-color pages; $1.25; newsstand distribution; monthly from DC COMICS INC.

The world's most famous science fiction hero (sorry, Luke Skywalker!) returns to comic books in February in a nine issue DC Comics New Format series.

Flash Gordon is touted as being extremely faithful to creator Alex Raymond's work, albeit with some contemporary touches that will appeal to today's audiences. Editor Mike Gold notes that the book's artistic style is "modernized to the extent that we're not using the clearly non-aerodynamic art deco-type of rocketships that Raymond designed—and we're not doing *Star Wars*-type rockets either!"

In the DC version, Flash Gordon maintains his roots as a retired professional athlete, but now he's an ex-basketball player formerly with the Boston Celtics. "He's very much a jock," explains Gold. "Flash is not necessarily stupid, but he's never had to deal with a lot of reality, either."

The maxi series retells the basic Flash Gordon adventure: Flash and television reporter Dale Arden are tricked by Dr. Zarkov into making a spaceflight to the planet Mongo, where they eventually

Yeah, but wait 'til you see it in 3-D

meet a variety of unusual races and battle the menace of the insidious Ming the Merciless.

"Ming was created to be—and always has been—the absolute seminal comics villain," Gold asserts. "They've never come nastier or more thoroughly degenerate."

Flash Gordon's back—from DC.

Gold adds, "It's one hell of a challenge for Dan Jurgens to follow in the footsteps of his predecessors on *Flash Gordon*, especially Alex Raymond, who is generally regarded as being the greatest comics artist of all time. Dan has risen to the occasion. This is beautiful work!"

As for the original *Flash Gordon* strip, fans should check out the Kitchen Sink graphic novels section. —ME—

FLINTSTONE KIDS

Written by MICHAEL GALLAGHER; pencilled by WARREN KESMER; inked by JACQUELINE ROETCHER; edited by SID JACOBSON

32 four-color pages; $1.00; newsstand distribution; bi-monthly from MARVEL COMICS GROUP

Further adventures of the Flintstone Kids at school, with the Bedrock P.I., and introducing new Flintstones we've never met before.

FLINTSTONES 3-D

Written and edited by JOHN STEPHENSON; illustrated by JORGE PACHECO

32 3-D pages; $2.50; quarterly from BLACKTHORNE PUBLISHING

Editor/writer John Stephenson greets *Amazing Heroes* with a hearty "Yabba Dabba Doo," and announces that *Flintstones 3-D* is going strong after its first two issues.

"Hanna-Barbera is impressed with our efforts," Stephenson adds. "We sent them

20 copies of issue #1, and they asked for 10 copies of #2! There are people around their offices that *have* to get their hands on a copy!" That Flinstone-fever has also spread to the stands, as Blackthorne is pleasantly surprised with the title's sales figures.

***Flintstones 3-D* #3** adapts the TV episode entitled "Dino Disappears." It's set soon after Pebbles is born, and Dino's jealousy over the attention the baby is receiving causes him to run away from home. When Fred and Barney try to retrieve Dino they mistakenly grab a look-alike, which leads to what Stephenson describes as a "wild madcap slugfest."

Issue #4 retells the story of Pebbles's birth, inspired by the 1962 television episode known as "The Blessed Event." It's a tale filled with hilarious slapstick sequences with Fred in the role of the frenzied neo father.

The editor admits that he is "very confident and optimistic" that Taft Merchandising (owner of the Hanna-Barbera cartoon copyrights) will renew Blackthorne's option on the series and allow them to produce another quartet of issues. He adds that beginning with issue #3, ***Flintstones 3-D*** will convert to full-page illustrations, making the 3-D effect more visually tolerable and also providing a better showcase for the art of Jorge Pacheco. —ME—

FOOFUR

Written by MICHAEL GALLAGHER; pencilled by BEN BROWN; inked by JACQUELINE ROETICHER; edited by SID JACOBSON

32 four-color pages, $1.00; newsstand distribution; bi-monthly from MARVEL COMICS GROUP

More exploits of the nine dogs and a can in their victorian mansion.

FOREVER PEOPLE

Written by J.M. DeMATTEIS; pencilled by PARIS CULLINS; inked by KARL KESEL; edited by KAREN BERGER

6-issue mini-series, 32 four-color pages, $1.25; newsstand distribution; monthly from DC COMICS, INC.

It's the "super-hero *Big Chill*." No, that doesn't mean that Kevin Kline, Glenn Close, and William Hurt have signed to play the Comedian, Silk Spectre, and Dr. Manhattan in the *Watchmen* movie. It's the Forever People's return to forever . . . or return from comics limbo.

Writer J.M. DeMatteis, who quickly admits that the ***Forever People*** is his favorite of Jack Kirby's "Fourth World" creations, is revitalizing the once-outdated "super-powered flower children" into what he hopes will be a viable team of (and comic about) super-heroes. Realizing that these "space hippies" could not survive in today's market without change, DeMatteis has made a bold move rarely seen in comics: he has *aged* the characters! This is no "alternate reality" or "possible future." Mark Moonrider, Big Bear, Beautiful Dreamer, and Serifan are all several years older, and Vykin the Black is now deceased.

As witnessed in the first two issues of the mini-series, the Forever People are plucked from their Utopian home planet Adon and thrust onto Earth by an evil force known as The Dark. Serifan has been seduced by The Dark and is causing his former teammates a great deal of grief.

Maya, the mysterious female who was cosmically hatched in ***Forever People* #1**, is acting as the team's guide during their journey on Earth, and Donny, a crippled boy that the group met in their first series, is now an adult and plays an integral role in the Forever People's struggle against The Dark.

Forever People* #3-6** continues to weave plot threads that are somehow linked to the war between Chaos and Order from last year's ***Dr. Fate mini-series — which was written by DeMatteis. The story also subtly ties into the recent ***Millennium*** epic.

Naturally, this is a super-hero vs. super-villain series that revels in the magic and grandeur of Jack Kirby, the genius who inspired the revival. But the book is more than just a battle between the Forever People and The Dark. It's an examination of "the idealism of youth versus the reality of adult life," explains DeMatteis. During their mission on Earth, the Forever People must "get in touch with who and what they *were*, as well as accept who and what they *are*."

"That's what I'm doing with Forever People—blowing out their naive idealism without destroying their dreams." Since the author was approximately the same age as this comic's characters during their first incarnation, it is a safe assumption that many of the human struggles in this mini-series are semi-autobiographical, at least symbolically.

"We finally learn who the Forever People are," says DeMatteis, "and what they're all about . . . and they're not necessarily what we think they are!" —MR—

*A **Forever People** cover by Cullins and Kesel—the space-age hippies are back!*

FOX COMICS

Written and illustrated by VARIOUS; edited by DAVID VODICKA

40 black-and-white pages; magazine-sized; $2.95; bi-monthly from FOX COMICS

Flying in the face of consumer and retailer indifference, ***Fox Comics***, the Australian anthology title that distributors find hard to classify will continue on its merry way undaunted over the coming year. "Basically we do what we do because we enjoy doing it," was editor David Vodicka's off-the-cuff encapsulation of the magazine's *raison d'etre*, "and as long as that enthusiasm remains we can easily afford to keep on going." Citing a flow on effect from the general in the black-and-white market along with the basic nonconformity of the mag, Vodicka expressed disappointment that sales had been up and down like the proverbial dog's dinner whilst steady improvement had been made with the design and strip quality. "Without trying to blow our horn too loudly, I do feel that the last few issues (**#16-17**) have stood up well in comparison to similar publications like ***Escape*** and ***Prime Cuts***," he confided, "and that with us being basically an amateur production, too."

For the future, then, Vodicka promises more of the same, but with hopefully a more rounded finish. Slice-of-life and stories of wry humor will again feature prominently, but with a few more dramatic pieces thrown in for added weight. There will be more teaming of writers and artists on hand, as well as more all-new work from the British "Fast Fiction" contingent who have supported the book over the past few years. Upcoming too are new works from Eddie Campbell, Phil Elliott, and Ed Pinsent, whilst "Roscoe the Dawg" by Martin Trengove makes it triumphant return after a short stint at Renegade around issue **#20**. Special mention should also be made of New Zealander Dylan Horrocks, whose strip "Sex" will run as a continuing feature for four or so issues. —PB—

FRAGGLE ROCK

Written by STAN KAY; illustrated by MARIE SEVERIN; edited by SID JACOBSON

32 four-color pages; $1.00; newsstand distribution; bi-monthly from MARVEL COMICS

This one should more aptly be titled ***Tales of Fraggle Rock***, since it's actually just a reprint of the first ***Fraggle Rock*** series. But it's another chance for you Marie Severin fans out there to pick up some of her more recent work.

FRANK THE UNICORN

Written, drawn and edited by PHIL YEH

32 black-and-white pages; $2.00; bi-monthly from FRAGMENTS WEST

Frank the Unicorn, Phil Yeh's pro-literacy comic, comes out bi-monthly when Yeh isn't going off cross country on another "Cartoonists Across America" tour, or painting another of his series of 100 outdoor murals depicting his literacy mascot dinosaurs reading. Issue **#5**, planned for December release, begins a four-part adventure wherein Frank and company go to China and encounter cameo guest shots by various other comics creators. Issue **#5** has a special appearance by Trina Robbins and the California Girls. Issue **#6** guest stars Stan Sakai and Usagi Yojimbo, and introduces Patrick Rabbit, whose origin is told in **#7** of Usagi's own book (from Fantagraphics). Patrick will be spun off into his own series this summer (q.v.). —HMac—

Reed or I'll kick yer ess.

FRENCH ICE

Written and illustrated by LELONG; translated and edited by RJM LOFFICIER

24 black-and-white pages, $2.00; monthly from RENEGADE PRESS (Mature Readers)

French Ice will end with **#16**. "We will have run out of 'Carmen Cru' material by then," said publisher Deni Loubert. "We're pulling out all stops and printing stories that I had reservations about because of the French sense of humor. It's very earthy humor and I'm not sure some of the readers will be able to appreciate it." For this reason, there will be warnings on the covers of ***French Ice*** about the mature themes, mostly in the *Kador* stories.

In **#10**, which comes out in January, there will be three *Carmen Cru* stories that center around the Priest. How can anyone resist a priest who does for Catholicism what W.C. Fields did for comedy? The back-up feature is *Kador* in "Learning New Tricks."

February brings us an all-Carmen Cru issue, featuring the first two *Carmen Cru* stories ever done by Lelong: "Chips & Peanuts" and "The Crooks." Fans of Carmen will be interested to see these stories because she doesn't have quite as refined a look as she has later. Since each of the special stories is four pages long, there is room for two more *Carmen Cru* stories, plus a *Kador* feature, "Kador on TV," in which he gets interviewed on television along with his master!

In March, there will be a special issue: three *Kador* stories and one *Carmen Cru* story. The titles of the *Kador* stories are "The Separation," "Kama Sutra," and "The Punishment."

"The Attack," "The Vermin," and

Carmen Cru continues in French Ice.

From the pages of **Fusion**.

"The Neighbors" are all *Carmen Cru* stories for the April issue. These stories will take a look at Carmen's immediate neighborhood. "More Kama Sutra" is the *Kador* back up feature, kind of a sequel to the "Kama Sutra" story in **#12**!

Issue **#14** will bring us three *Carmen Cru* stories: "The Developer," "The Mail," and "The Happy Bar." In the latter story, Carmen manages to connive people into buying her free drinks. She is truly a formidable granny! "Kador and the SPCA" will be the back-up feature.

There will be a half and half issue in **#15**, but no titles as yet. What will we do for humor once Carmen is gone?

—CG—

FUSION

Written and illustrated by VARIOUS; edited by LETITIA GLOZER; conceptual editor LEX NAKASHIMA

32 black-and-white pages, $2.00; bi-monthly from ECLIPSE COMICS

"Indio and the crew of the *Tsunami* have completed their 'Soulstar Commission' assignment," says conceptual editor Lex Nakashima, "and will now learn how fast one can lose a fortune. Stories running for two to three issues will be interspersed with issues made up of shorter pieces where we get a more casual look at the crew and their past. We will meet the crew of the *Mistral*, friends and rivals of another tramp ship. Two new crewmembers are added as they escape the aftermath of the 'Soulstar Commission' escapade.

"The next big adventure will show what happens when two members of the crew go into heat on a planet of born-again conservatives.

"All that and more *Weasel Patrol* ('Run Away!'), and *Dr Watchstop* (Ken Macklin).

"In addition to regulars Gallacci, Dowling, Macklin, Buhalis, and Hath-away, we will see the first appearances by Phil Foglio, new artists Larry Dixon and writers Peter Norwood, Michael Reaves, and Diane Duane." —FPn—

G

G.I. JOE

Written by LARRY HAMA; pencilled by MARSHALL ROGERS; inked by RANDY EMBERLIN; edited by BOB HARRAS

32 four-color pages, $1.00; newsstand distribution; monthly from MARVEL COMICS GROUP

Marshall Rogers, fresh from *Silver Surfer*, joins the *Joe* creative team with issue **#75** or **#76** (to be determined). The Joes continue to defend the U.S. from C.O.B.R.A. and other threats to national security.

G.I. JOE COMICS MAGAZINE

Written by LARRY HAMA; illustrated by VARIOUS; edited by BOB HARRAS

64 four-color digest-size pages, $1.50; newsstand distribution; bi-monthly from MARVEL COMICS GROUP

G.I. Joe Comics Magazine, the bi-monthly digest series, will continue to reprint early issues of *G.I. Joe*.

G.I. JOE IN 3-D

Written by JOHN STEPHENSON; illustrated by ADRIAN MORO; edited by JOHN STEPHENSON and VICKY REICHMAN

32 3-D pages; $2.50; quarterly from BLACKTHORNE PUBLICATIONS

Issue #4, written by Bruce Jones, finds three terms of two Joes each testing new high tech equipment and doing battle against their evil organization COBRA. Issue **#5**, according to the editor, takes place underwater and pits the Joes against COBRA scuba divers. Yo Joe!

—MSM—

G.I. JOE SPECIAL MISSIONS

Written by LARRY HAMA; pencilled by HERB TRIMPE; inked by ANDY MUSHYNSKY; edited by BOB HARRAS

32 four-color pages, $1; newsstand distribution; monthly from MARVEL COMICS GROUP

G.I. Joe Special Missions continues to feature adventures of solo characters and specific Joe teams—now monthly!

GAG!

Written and illustrated by VARIOUS; edited by PHIL ELLIOTT

32 black-and-white pages, $2.95; quarterly from HARRIER COMICS/NEW WAVE

From the fourth issue *Gag!* switches to the larger magazine size format as editor Phil Elliott feels that the audience familiar with many contributors from magazines such as *Escape, Prime Cuts* and *Honk!* will respond more readily to that format. Contributing to issue **#4** will be Phil Laskey, presenting a new "Alex and Ali" strip previewing his second book. Glenn Dakin's "Captain Oblivion," Eddie Campbell's "Professor Bean," "Mr. Day and Mr. Night" from Dakin and Elliott, and further strips from Paul Grist, Rian Hughes, and John Watson.

Ed Pinsent and John Bagnall join the line-up for issue **#5** and issue **#6** will feature all previously unseen work instead of the mixture including work only printed for small circulation comics. Pinsent, Campbell, Dakin, Grist, Bagnall and Elliott himself all appear. —FPn—

GAIJIN

Written and illustrated by GABRIEL MORRISSETTE; edited by MARK SHAINBLUM

32 black-and-white pages; $1.75; bi-monthly from MATRIX GRAPHIC SERIES

What happens when you take an s-f comic and mix in a ninja, a psychotic lady with a love of weaponry, a scientist and a character based on the pro wrestler Mad Dog Vachon? *Gaijin*, that's what!

Gaijin is set in a troubling future. The U.S. and U.S.S.R. are burnt-out shells of their former selves. An Islamic superstate and the Japanese Pacific Co-operative Sphere hold the reins of power.

I'm not sure which of the **G.I. Joe** *comics this is from, but dig that crazy first line*

In this setting we find the Japanese Ministry of International Trade and Industry, MITI, attempting to restructure the U.S. economy. After all, the U.S. has a history of being one of Japan's biggest industrial customers.

Problem is, there are a number of U.S. hardline political organizations that see this as an attempt to take over the country. So these groups oppose such outside aid, led by the Reagan Foundation (right first time!).

While one of the characters in *Gaijin* is a real, honest-and-for true ninja, he is only part of a five-member team. As a result, the ninja aspect of the book will be played down considerably.

The members of the book's team of high-tech, martial arts super-mercenaries are: Damaru (code-name Dreamshadow), the leader, true Gaijin—half Japanese, half African; Agni, our ninja in the classic sense (spy/intelligence gatherer/martial artist); Scream, a war survivor with a psychotic love of and need for weapons; Moravik, the team's scientific whiz; and Maurice (code-name Metal), a big, dumb looking guy with the ability to increase/decrease his body's density (this is the character based on Mad Dog Vachon).

Issue **#2** of *Gaijin* should be on the stands even as you read this. Issue **#3** will focus on Scream as she visits a major shopping mall. The story will use the mall to give us a look at the structure of the society in which the team must live and function. An unusual character, named Saki, will be introduced.

Issues **#4-6** will revolved around an east coast contract. While Maurice/Metal is in Montreal to learn about his past, he will also have to solve a mystery about his doctor. Agni and Damaru will be working on the contract in New Atlantis (a gigantic city that occupies the area from 20th century New York City to Boston).

Creator Morrissette stresses that this will be a team book and not the exclusive domain of stereotypical ninja shenanigans. "We'll look at the society, the politics and the people. Hopefully, we'll also provide entertaining, fast-moving stories at the same time."

Those familiar with the art on *Northguard* in *New Triumph* will have a good idea of the quality of Morrissette's art. His writing style differs quite a bit from most comics writers, having a distinctive European flavor. —SW—

GANTAR—THE LAST NABU

Written and illustrated by JOHN A. PECK

7-issue limited series; 32 black-and-white pages; $1.75; bi-monthly from TARGET COMICS

This series should conclude this year, revealing all the secrets behind Gantar—and exactly what a Nabu is, anyway.

THE GAUNTLET

Written by CAROL STARK; illustrated by STEVEN PEARSON; edited by PAT DAVIDSON

10-issue series; 32 four-color pages; $1.75; monthly from VANGUARD GRAPHICS

"*The Gauntlet* is a story about friends facing a dangerous path, and vicious enemies who plan their death or capture," states series writer Carol Stark. The ten-issue limited series begins explosively when Samantha, a paranorm, saves the life of Arthur Lockwood, an ex-private investigator. Samantha discovers Arthur in a dark alley, being beaten to death by Mafia assassins.

It turns out Arthur was en route to testify against a local crime boss when he was attacked so savagely. Arthur was set up by someone in the D.A.'s office, and the word is out on the streets that the Mafia will pay highly for his death—or *slow* dismemberment.

Samantha, while possessing telepathic abilities, is on the run for *some* reason, although she can't remember why—or anything else about her past. Samantha is confronted with "wanted" posters all over the city, but she can't recall whether

***The Gauntlet*: friends facing a dangerous path.**

or not she has committed a crime. The government seeks Samantha too, for its own complex reasons. If that's not enough, a powerful telepath wants her

The one, the true, the only—from Dark Horse. Art by Kazuhisa Iwata.

for more personal reasons. This hunter has been searching for someone like Samantha for a long time, and he is ready to torture, maim or kill to have her.

This unusual—and rather desperate—pair is joined by Geri Walker, a vivacious teenager who survives life on the streets by using sly wit and astonishing strength. A street gang has vowed revenge upon her for interfering with their crimes; however, Geri's biggest trouble lurks behind the door of the home from which she has run away.

Trouble in triplicate faces Arthur, Samantha and Geri over *The Gauntlet*'s ten issue run, with the first issue due out in May 1988. —JH—

GERIATRICMAN

Written and illustrated by CHUCK BUNKER; edited by TIM CORRIGAN

one-shot; 24 black-and-white pages; $1.75; from C&T GRAPHICS

The warm-hearted adventures of the world's only senior citizen hero. "For sheer warmth and humanity," says publisher Tim Corrigan, "I'll stack this book up against anything in print." Allan Freeman provides the airbrushed cover; Chuck Bunker everything else.

GINGER FOX

Created, co-plotted and scripted by MIKE BARON; co-plotted and illustrated by JACOB and ARNOLD PANDER; edited by DIANA SCHUTZ

4-issue mini-series; 32 four-color pages; $1.75; monthly from COMICO (Mature Readers)

Soap opera: Hollywood, love, hate, sleaze, gossip, action, and terminal diseases all play a part in *Ginger Fox*, a four-issue Comico mini-series reintroducing the heroine of Mike Baron's graphic novel to comics audiences.

The series involves the problems Ginger faces as she tries to make what Baron calls "the ultimate horror movie." The lead actor in the film reportedly has contracted AIDS, and he must cope with the reactions from others concerning this rumor. Ginger's ex-husband, described by Baron as "a real S.O.B.," returns and threatens to take their child away from her. A group of investors are plotting to discredit Ginger and replace her with someone they have hand-picked for CEO. And lots of other unsavory human behavior is taking place behind poor Ginger's back. Heck, who needs *General Hospital* when you've got stuff like this?

Baron adds, "*Ginger Fox* is a lot spicier than the graphic novel was." —ME—

GODZILLA

Written by TOHO COMPANY; illustrated by KAZUHEISA IWATA; translated by VIZ COMMUNICATIONS; edited by RANDY STRADLEY

6-issue limited series; 32 black-and-white pages; $1.75; monthly from DARK HORSE COMICS

Beginning in March, the new Dark Horse adaptation of *Godzilla* will begin its six-issue run. The book will reprint the Japanese manga adaptation of *Godzilla:1985*, a movie substantially altered in its run in American movie houses.

The Japanese version of the movie (and hence, the comic) contains much more footage of Godzilla doing what he does best: smashing Tokyo! Raymond Burr was edited into the American version, but appears nowhere in the Japanese version. Stradley says that if there is enough room in the book, the unused Godzilla pin-ups from the *Godzilla Special* will be used. The possibility of another *Godzilla* series is likely as well, depending on the sales of this series. —AM—

THE GOLDEN AMAZON

Adapted from the work of JOHN RUSSELL FEARN by PHIL HARBOTTLE; illustrated by RON TURNER; edited by JOHN LAWRENCE

3-issue mini-series; 32 black-and-white pages; $1.95; bi-monthly from HARRIER COMICS

Possibly the best known character created by fantasy writer John Russell Fearn was the Golden Amazon, an amoral super-powerful heroine who travelled the galaxy meting out instant justice wherever she deemed it necessary. Fearn developed the character over 24 novels, and this mini-series will be an adaptation of the seventh novel, although if the series proves successful it's intended to follow the series through chronologically.

The Amazon is bestowed with an indefinite lifespan and the strength of seven men during an experiment in her infancy by a scientist who envisages her developing as the ultimate force for good and putting an end to war. He didn't foresee that she would be a law unto herself, dealing with criminals in a ruthlessly efficient manner, more often than not by strangling them.

The plot of this story involves an attempt to restore the power of the sun from gong into decline, circumstances for which the Amazon is held responsible. It's a pivotal point in her chronology as for the first time the task is beyond her powers alone and she must co-operate with others.

Artist Ron Turner (no relation to the underground comix publisher) produced the covers for many of the original *Golden Amazon* novels in the '50s and '60s. —PP—

GOOD GUYS

Written and illustrated by VARIOUS; edited by RICH MAURIZIO and JOHN A. WILCOX

28 full-color pages; $1.50; newsstand distribution; bi-monthly from SPOTLIGHT COMICS, INC.

Are you one of those collectors of TV cartoon inspired comic books that wondered what th' heck happened to *Mighty Heroes*?

Viacom International's silly super-team—Dispermen, Cuckooman, Strongman, Tornadomen, and Ropeman—will return to the stands in March, sharing Spotlight Comics' new *Good Guys* title with other features.

A Mighty Heroes cover by Jim Engel graces *Good Guys #1*, which includes the zany quintet in a tale written and drawn by Bill White (who also drew the group's first Spotlight adventure in *Mighty Heroes #1*). Another famous character from the Terrytoon stable is being revived for a back-up slot in *Good Guys*: Tom Terrific!! Longtime fans will remember that the cartoon episodes of the funnel headed young Tom and his dim-witted pooch Manfred were once a recurring segment on the *Captain Kangaroo Show*. Steve Keeter, Doug Cushman, and Nate Butler are in charge of Tom Terrific's return.

James Hound, described by writer Jim Main as a "Ralph Bakshi-type character that was created in the '60s," will also serve a tour of duty in a back up berth, with art courtesy of Ray Dirgo. —ME—

GORE SHRIEK

Written and illustrated by STEVE BISSETTE, GREG CAPULLO, BRUCE SPAULDING FULLER, and VARIOUS; edited by TOM SKULAN

48 black-and-white pages; $2.50; semi-annually from FANTACO ENTERPRISES

After a fourth issue released in the Spring of 1988, this "totally uncensored horror anthology" (as editor Tom Skulan puts it) will "pupate," only to "re-emerge in 1989 with a new title in a completely different format."

Gore Shriek fans will be kept well fed with a series of merchandising spin-offs,

From **Gore Shriek**. *Ech*

however, including a *Gore Shriek Poster Magazine* with art by Bruce Spaulding Fuller, and several T-shirts. September will see the premiere of a *Gore Shriek* trade paperback, featuring new work by the *Gore Shriek* gang—some up to 40 pages in length. —K—

GREEN ARROW

Written by MIKE GRELL; pencilled by ED HANNIGAN; inked by DICK GIORDANO; edited by MIKE GOLD

32 four-color pages; $1.00; newsstand distribution; monthly from DC COMICS INC. (Mature Readers)

Barely two issues old, the fledgling and long denied *Green Arrow* comic greets the new year. Arising from the highly successful *The Longbow Hunters* series from last year, this monthly title will follow the pattern established in that book to the letter. The series is set in Seattle, and it is as close as writer Mike Grell can get it and as in touch with the real world as possible. "This book does not acknowledge any other super-heroes," says Grell. "I don't deny their existence here, but I choose not to have them intrude on this book. To that end, Oliver Queen, Green Arrow, is never referred to as Green Arrow. Dinah Drake Lance will never be seen as Black Canary in these pages either, although she is an integral part of the book. We all know that Black Canary is a member of the Justice League, but you won't hear it here. If Speedy appears at some point, it will be as Roy Harper.

Many of the same characters from *The Long Bow Hunters* will be alive and kicking in the new series. Many things are still happening, too many things were set in motion, for it all to have ended. As examples, the emotional and psychological scars from *TLH* between Oliver and Dinah are not yet healed. Also there is the matter of the $300,000 that Oliver picked up. "You better believe," says Grell, "that that kind of money will be drawing attention from the wrong quarters."

In specific issues, in #3-4, called "The Champions," a fragment from a space probe lands on one of the San Juan Islands in Washington, and two rival factions select champions to retrieve it for them. One group picks Green Arrow, and the other opts for Eddie Fires, an *TLH* alumnus.

In #5-6, Green Arrow gets involved with some real problems currently plaguing Seattle, gang warfare and gay bashings. Issue #7 will probably be a fill-in issue to give Ed Hannigan some catchup time, and then #8 picks up with a hijacking on the high seas, which involves terrorists, anti-terrorists and the Canadian Special Air Services which the U.S. Delta Force was patterned after. Issue #8 is the first of a 4-part series which will see the return of Greg Osborne and Shadow, both from *The Longbow Hunters*.

Looks like a big year for Seattle and Green Arrow. —ES—

GRENDEL

Written by MATT WAGNER; illustrated by MATT WAGNER, then HANNIBAL KING; and TIM SALES; edited by DIANA SCHUTZ

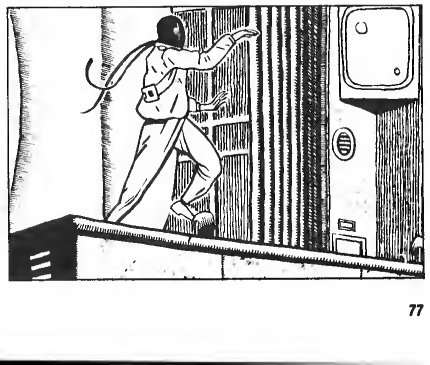
32 full-color pages; $1.50; monthly from COMICO (Mature Readers)

The big news here, of course, is that Matt Wagner will be drawing *Grendel* for a four-issue stint, beginning with #16, his first regular published art chores since the end of *Mage I*. Wagner will also write and draw a four-part back-up strip for the book featuring none other than Kevin Matchstick himself.

Following Bernie Mireault's controversial three-issue stand, Wagner hopes to continue in a wildly unconventional way. "[These] are basically just storytelling experiments on my part. 25 panels to a page. It doesn't look like the me that [people] are used to," he warns. Set during Hunter Rose's reign as Grendel, the four issues comprise two two-part stories, each an homage in part to the pulps. "The artwork and the covers are set up to kind of elicit that feel. The first two-part story is a detective story, kind of like 40s pulps. The second I'm going for a more psychologically twisted story, like a '50s pulp."

The stories are narrated by Wiggins, the cop from the Christme/Brian saga, now an old man, and in typical Matt Wagner fashion, the title character remains almost oblique in the story. "Grendel and Argent don't play immediately prominent roles, is the best way

Grendel



and more Grendel!

to put it. They aren't on stage a whole lot. Since we already know what happens to those characters, I'm telling tales about them via other characters' points of view."

For some, however, the big news about these issues is the all-new *Mage* back up strip, in four four-page installments. "Basically the third volume of the Donning editions has extra pages. From the very beginning I had planned on doing a new story that would kind of be a little adventure tale that takes place between *Mage I* and *Mage II*. The more I thought about it the more I thought why don't we publish it first. So it just seemed ironically perfect to have *Mage* in the back of *Grendel*, as opposed to *Grendel* in the back of *Mage*."

The story takes place within five years after the end of *Mage*. "It doesn't really need to be clarified any more than that." Kevin will be the only familiar figure who appears. "It gives people a little something to chew on until I'm ready to do *Mage II* the summer of '89. There's a couple of surprises, but ... it's doing exactly what I want it to do, which is just show the stage Kevin is at now and his entirely different outlook, which will set you up so you're ready for the mentality that he's assumed by the time *Mage II: The Hero Defined* starts."

This will also be a departure from the Wagner art which we were used to: fully painted pages in the European style, "similar to Enki Bilal."

Following these four all-Wagner issues, it's another four-issue stretch, this time by newcomer Hannibal King. (If the name sounds familiar it's because it's the name of one of the vampires from Marv Wolfman's *Tomb of Drocula*.)

Wagner describes the style of these four issues as "a little more down to earth, not quite as unusual as mine and Bernie's. They will be horror stories that cover a period of about 400 years. Grendel, as a character, makes no appearance in any of the four issues, but the presence is highly felt and truly significant. It takes 400 years for the Grendel persona to find an individual truly twisted enough to inhabit the way he did Hunter Rose, so [the story] kind of stepping stones its way over the next several centuries."

Also in the works is another collaboration between Wagner and artist Dean Motter, on still more tales of Hunter Rose, these more "day in the life" type stories. While it is still in the planning stages, Wagner hopes to do the book in the same black, white and red format as their previous collaboration, The *Grendel* novel from Ballantine has been pushed back a bit. "It's going to be fall '88, but Fall is much more a Grendel time of year."

Looking even further ahead, following King and inker Tim Sales, the art team on *Grendel* will be John K. "Fashion in Action." Snyder III and Jay Geldhof. Wagner is very enthusiastic about the practice of changing artists on *Grendel*. "Each new look provides me with a different outlook on the story so I can keep revitalizing it. Every phase of *Grendel* should have an entirely different motive and direction. I'm not doing this just to do new stories. I have to have a reason. That's why having the different artists is so good, because they bring in their own look on it which immediately provides me with a new avenue."

And yet, he notes, "Grendel is always educational to me, but not revelational like *Mage* is." He admits to being eager to get to work on *Mage II*. "The ideas are flying on *Mage II*. *Mage II* is going to be a shocker for people and for me."

—HMacD—

GRIMJACK

Written by JOHN OSTRANDER, illustrated by TOM MANDRAKE, edited by RICK OLIVER

32 four-color pages $1.75, monthly from FIRST COMICS

Newsflash from the *Cynosure Chronicle*: Characters die! Parts of city destroyed! Plotlines concluded! All culminating in issue #50.

Between now and then, there's the return of Dancer and an attempt to retake the city by the demons. Within the context of that plotline Cynosure undergoes major damage and there will a character introduced who just might spin off into his/her/(or knowing Cynosure)its own series.

As for *Muden's Bar* back-ups, Ted McKeever's Eddy Current will appear in *Grimjack* #47, out in February—the story will center around what would happen if Eddy ran into a group of Elvis impersonators. Other talents and characters slated to drop by are Mitch O'Connell (who did *Ginger Fox*) in a story about ... hm ... an Elvis impersonator (is this a new trend?), Hilary Barta will write one (and ink one by Doug Rice).

The June and July issues of *Grimjack* will be set-ups for *Crossroads*—First's major crossover series, since the concluding #5 of *CR* takes place in Cynosure. There is going to be a major confrontation between Nexus and Dreadstar (there will also be tie-ins with those characters' books) and it's up to Grimjack to stop it.

As a side note: the 50th issue will also mark Tom Mandrake being the longest artist on *Grimjack*—yes, even longer than creator Tim Truman.

—KD—

Eddy Current meets Elvis impersonators in Grimjack

GROO THE WANDERER

Written and illustrated by SERGIO ARAGONES, person most likely to be quoted in the following preview is MARK EVANIER, edited by SOME UNLUCKY STIFF WHOM MARK EVANIER STILL DOESN'T KNOW THE NAME OF AS IN THE LAST FOUR PREVIEW SPECIALS

32 four-color pages, $1.00, newsstand distribution monthly from MARVEL EPIC COMICS

The making of a *Groo* preview

AH: *Is everything the same for the indicia, Mark?*

ME: "Everything's the same in *Groo*," says Vanna White's newest boyfriend Mark Evanier. "The same format, the same creative team, and the same jokes."

AH: *Wait a minute. Mark. You specifically said in the last* Preview Special *that you were going to get rid of those ten tired old jokes.*

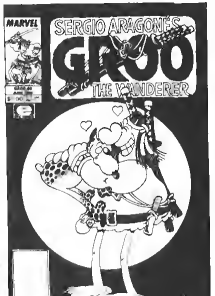
ME: Yeah, but I didn't say we'd come up with any new ones.

AH: *But that means this will be a joke-less comedy book.*

ME: Well, most of them have been so far.

And so it goes. Regardless, an upcoming issue will find Groo in mourning in the morning, because he thinks he has eaten his dog Rufferto.

"This is easily one of the most pathetic scenes in the history of comic pathos," says Joan Collins's newest ex-husband Mark Evanier. "When Groo begins longing for his friend, he despairs. Every time he gets near the spot where Rufferto really is, he hears him barking, and he thinks he is imagining it. It's pretty pathetic, actually," sighs Evanier, the man who recently spent 90 seconds in jail for punching out Sean Penn after he punched out a photographer.



All the same jokes

Tom Luth, the prodigal colorist of the book, will return in an upcoming issue, but no homecoming party is in sight. "I'm of the opinion, having studied comics at great length," says Evanier, close personal friend to Michael Jackson, "that coloring *Groo* is the hardest job in comics, bar none. I think that the highest paid person in comics should be the person who colors *Groo*. It is a tribute to Tom's enduring love for the comic, that he accepts an hourly rate slightly under that of shining shoes, to color *Groo*."

A *Groo* poster is in the works, having already been drawn by Sergio Aragonés, who is never mentioned very much in this preview, because Mark Evanier, the star of George Lucas's next *Star Wars* movie, is our contact person about the book. "Tom started coloring it shortly after this year's San Diego Convention, and with luck, will have it done by the next San Diego Convention, but probably not. It has so many people in it that it makes the *Legion* poster by Giffen look like a Maytag repairman ad."

"The Granny Groo story promised about 104 *Preview Specials* ago will finally be coming out," says twelve-time Pulitzer Prize winner Evanier, "and we're going to have the return of Chakal very shortly. We don't know what we're doing on the book. Groo is such a silly character, and the world he lives in is so silly, that we keep pushing Granny Groo off so that we can do more silly stuff. One story coming up is called 'The Village of Miggledy,' in which a town which hears that Groo is coming completely destroys itself before he can even get there. Another upcoming story brings in Taranto, who has made a living out of pretending to be Groo's friend, who suddenly has a compelling financial reason to be Groo's friend, and Groo won't believe him."

"I can promise people," says Pee-Wee Herman's father Mark Evanier, "that there will be no more poetry from Steven W. Ebner in this book. We've given him three pages so far, and that's it. Also, people often wonder if the people doing *Groo* are as stupid as the characters in the book (no comment). When we started doing the jokes about cheese dip, the readers, thinking they were funny, started sending us chese dip in the mail. So, I, in my infinite wisdom started another gag about fertilizer (Oh Sh*t, I can see this one coming.) Sure enough, people started mailing us fertilizer. As it happens, the Marvel mailroom just throws those away, as envelopes of fertilizer do not survive transnational shipping. But now the Marvel mailroom smells like fertilizer. My next gag, needless to say, will be about gold krugerrands and Cadillac convertibles."

Given Evanier's nomination to the Supreme Court after Bork was shot down, Marvel Epic hopes to capitalize on his popularity by releasing a book called *Something Like the Groo Chronicles*. This book will feature reprints of all of the old out-of-print Pacific *Groos*, and the Eclipse *Groo Special*, as well as a large amount of new material. "The contract for this book is being handled by the same person who did the contract for the Groo graphic novel, therefore we expect to see it come out either around the turn of the century, or when Tom Luth finishes coloring the poster, whichever comes first."

"Stan Sakai is still lettering the book because he hasn't figured out how much of a hit *Usagi Yojimbo* is, and told us to

stuff it," admits *US* magazine's sexiest man winner Mark Evanier. "We therefore ask people not to write fan mail to ***Usagi Yojimbo*** or Stan Sakai."

One last note from the man who brought us the X-rated #1 single, "I Want Your Socks," Mark Evanier. "Comic book humor is for professionals. Don't try it at home. In fact, don't try it at all. You think I want to lose my job?" —AM—

Art Clokey's answer to Mr. Bill again teams up with sidekick Pokey, in 3-D, for another thrilling adventure with Ricochet Pete, the meanest, toughest lawman of the West! And if that adventure isn't enough for ya, how about a journey with our little green blob of bendable earth through Dinosaur Valley?! Not recommended for the faint-hearted. —MSM—

informed by now." Well, I should hope so.

Gump is selling better overseas than it is in America, but enough issues have not yet been sold to fund the publication of the second issue as yet. Clowers is determined to put it out, though. Expect more adventures with senile vets, dissolved super-heroes, put-upon crazies and the devil's pizza joint.

Meanwhile—just to keep them busy, mind you—Clowers and Gorham will be circulating a strip to syndicates. Keep an eye out for *Buster Crab*, either in your local paper or, if it doesn't sell soon, as a comic. —EV—

GRUN

Written by ROB SHARP; illustrated by PAUL MARSHALL; edited by ROB SHARP

24 black-and-white pages, $1.95; bi-monthly from HARRIER COMICS

The major story over the next six months will be "Sun Runners," as the agency instruct Grun to participate in a publicity race to the edge of the galaxy. Over 200 other ships are taking part, many of which are crewed by Grun's old adversaries out to discover the secret to be found at the edge of the galaxy. There's also one small ship that seems to be tracking Grun throughout. Following the conclusion of "Sun Runners," there will be an origin story of sorts explaining why the bulldog-featured Grun is not considered in the slightest unusual on Toskin.

The *Overman* back-up strip continues with art by John Wilding. In "Masterminds," a building appears overnight in New York, sent from another dimension and containing 2,000 assassins who've been sent to kill Overman. Stripped of his powers, he must find a way to survive. —FPI—

Grun will soon get an origin.

GUMBY IN 3-D

Adapted and illustrated by DAVID CODY WEISS; edited by JOHN STEPHENSON

32 3-D pages; $2.50; quarterly from BLACKTHORNE PUBLISHING

He's Gumby, damnit! And he's back.

GUMP

Written and illustrated by VARIOUS; edited by DAVID CLOWERS and GREG GORHAM

40 black-and-white pages; magazine format; $4.00; irregularly from GUMP PUBLICATIONS

"Did Dave tell you we were being sued by Jennifer Beals and Frank Zappa?" read the letter from Greg Gorham, alluding to my last preview of *Gump*. After a sleepless night I got hold of David, who set my mind at partial rest by saying, "I'm sure I would have been

GUNSHIP

Written by RICHARD S. McENROE, based on a novel by HENRY ZEYBEL; illustrated by MIKE HARRIS; edited by RICHARD S. McENROE

4-issue limited series; 32 full-color pages; $2.00; bi-monthly from UPSHOT GRAPHICS COMICS

*A page from **Gunship**, illustrated by Mike Harris.*

Unable to deal with the failure of his third marriage, Major Hal Zorn volunteers to return to Vietnam and the one thing he knows he can do well. There he finds Spectre, the AC-130 gunship designed to destroy shipping on the Ho Chi Minh trail. To Zorn it's the answer to his prayers: a flying shooting gallery, a Super Bowl every night of the week. As the weeks go by and the Spectres become more and more vulnerable to improved ground defense and surface-to-air missiles, Zorn discovers that his victories are an illusion, that the effectiveness of the gunships are wildly exaggerated, and that the program, like the war itself, is a massive exercise in self-deception. Lieutenant Colonel Henry Zeybel (USAF, ret.) a master navigator who flew 147 gunship missions into Laos and Cambodia (as well as 775 resupply missions in South Vietnam), based ***Gunship*** closely on his experiences during the war. Richard S. McEnroe is the author of many science fiction novels, including *The Shattered Stars* and *Flight of Honor*. Mike Harris's credits include ***Aztec Ace*** for Eclipse, ***Infinity, Inc.*** and ***All-Star Squadron*** for DC, and ***Web of Spider-Man*** for Marvel.

What is the fate of ***Fate***? Stay tuned and keep your eyes peeled. —PC—

HAP HAZARD

Written and illustrated by RICHARD FLORENCE; edited by DENNIS PIMPLE

32 black-and-white pages; $2.00; infrequently from RANDOM HOUSE

"Richard Florence managed to shed the excess baggage of his collaborative writer this time around," says Dennis Pimple, the publisher and former collaborative writer of ***Hap Hazard***. "So issue #2—coming out in summer 1988—will be free of such clutter as plot and coherency."

Instead, ***Hap Hazard #2*** will be cover-to-cover gunplay, booze, and fabulous babes. "Richard has the word 'ACTION' tattooed in reverse on his forehead as a reminder, and it works," says Pimple.

HARRIER PREVIEW

Written and drawn by VARIOUS; edited by MARTIN LOCK

24 black-and-white pages, 75 cents; one-shot from HARRIER COMICS

As a way of introducing two new Harrier titles, editor and publisher Martin Lock is producing this special low-priced issue featuring Cuirass and Nightbird. You'll discover more about both those titles by reading their individual entries. Go on, I'll wait.

The Cuirass story can be absorbed quite independently of the series, while the Nightbird story is a prelude to events in the mini-series. —FPI—

HAWKMOON: THE RUNESTAFF

Adapted by ROGER SALICK; illustrated by RAFAEL KAYANAN; edited by LAUREL FITCH

32 full-color pages; $1.75; bi-monthly from FIRST COMICS

As you recall from last episode, just as Hawkmoon had fetched the Sword of the Dawn and was ready to sail home to Europe from the city of Narleen on the continent of Amarehk, the Warrior in Jet and Gold had asked him to take a side trip to the city of Dnark, where the Runestaff had a little job for him. Jeez, I dunno, says Hawkmoon, what with the muggers and the crowds and the traffic and the heat and the wife waiting at home for me and all, I think I'd just as soon skip it. You'll be sorry, says the Warrior.

HAND OF FATE

Written by BRUCE JONES; illustrated by GERARD FORTON; edited by APRIL CAMPBELL and LETITIA GLOZER

3-issue mini-series; 32 four-color pages; $2.00; bi-monthly from ECLIPSE COMICS

Okay. Here's the scoop. All three issues have been completed but, as of this writing, Eclipse cannot say exactly when ***Hand of Fate*** will appear. The reasons are connected with distributor cautiousness. Frankly, orders for the series were low. So low, in fact, that Eclipse decided to delay release and aim to resolicit the series in the future. That future point should be very early in '88. If the response is better then, ***Hand of Fate*** will hit the comics shops. For now, the company and writer-creator Bruce Jones can only kick their heels in frustration.

Both Jones and Eclipse have a great liking for the book which, to recap its previous *Preview* entry, centers around Artemis Fate, a supposed "psychic detective." In fact, he isn't psychic, but his female partner is. Together, they are caught up in mysteries in the psychic world or just plain mysteries!

Bruce Jones says ***Hand of Fate*** is an "experimental book" and that there is a need for more of the kind on the comics stands. However, he regrets that such books are "often axed before they have a chance to prove themselves."

***Hap Hazard** art.*

As we rejoin our heroes, they're just about to head out of the Gulf Stream (which in this book is probably called the Grielfen Strouymen or something like that) when suddenly their ship is surrounded by gigantic winged lizards with gaping red jaws and triple rows of teeth. Well, on the other hand, says Hawkmoon, it'd be a shame to come all this way and not see the Statue of Liberty and the Chrysler building and all that. So, off they go to Fun City to meet the Great Good Ones and find the true meaning of the Runestaff. —RF—

HEATHCLIFF

Written by MICHAEL GALLAGHER, pencilled by DAVE MANAK, WARREN KREMER and HOWARD POST, inked by JACQUIE ROETICHER, edited by SID JACOBSON

32 four-color pages, $1.00, newsstand distribution, eight issues a year from MARVEL COMICS GROUP

New adventures with the star of TV, newspapers and comic books, as well as new stories starring Top Dog in each issue.

Redefining the term "house cat"

HEATHCLIFF'S FUNHOUSE

Written by MICHAEL GALLAGHER, pencilled by DAVE MANAK, WARREN KREMER and HOWARD POST, inked by ROBERTA EDELMAN, edited by SID JACOBSON

32 four-color pages, $1.00, newsstand distribution, bi-monthly from MARVEL COMICS GROUP

New adventures with the star of TV, newspapers and comic books (sound familiar?). The companion to the popular *Heathcliff* comic.

HEAVY METAL

Written and illustrated by VARIOUS, edited by JULIE SIMMONS-LYNCH

112 full-color pages, $3.95, squarebound, newsstand distribution, quarterly from 21ST CENTURY COMMUNICATIONS (Mature Readers)

The Spring issue of ***Heavy Metal***, which ships in late February, will contain a new 64-page installment of Paolo Eleuteri Serpieri's "Morbus Gravis," a sequel to the story that appeared a year ago and most will remember as, in the words of editor Julie Simmons, "very hot, very sexy." Plans for the next two issues aren't finalized yet, but there will probably be some long stories by Daniel Torres and Enki Bilal, as well as a new piece by Moebius. All complete-in-one-issue, as usual. —GJ—

HECKLE AND JECKLE

Written by JIM MAIN and OTHERS, illustrated by VARIOUS, edited by JIM MAIN

28 full-color pages, $1.50, bi-monthly from SPOTLIGHT COMICS, INC.

Those mischievous magpies are now starring in their own bi-monthly comic from Spotlight! Their first issue features two Heckle and Jeckle misadventures: "Big Top Flops" by Jim Main and Gary Fields, and "Give 'Em a Yard and They'll Take a Mile" by Tim Corrigan and Ray Dirgo.

***Heckle and Jeckle* #2** will take the boys on a treasure hunting expedition in "Deep Six Saps," written by Jim Main, pencilled by Doug Cushman, and inked by Bud Gordiner. The second issue's cover is illustrated by comics veteran Joe Staton. Editor/writer Main adds that Staton is "quite happy doing covers for us, since it gives him the chance to draw funny animal characters."

The third issue of ***Heckle and Jeckle*** includes an *Untouchables* parody written by Jim Main. —ME—

HELLBLAZER

Written by JAMIE DELANO, illustrated by JOHN RIDGWAY, edited by KAREN BERGER

32 four-color pages, $1.25, monthly from DC COMICS, INC. (Mature Readers)

Jamie Delano's current plans for ***Hellblazer*** are concerned with keeping the strip set in Britain because "I can write a better horror story about the U.K. than I can about the U.S.A.," and sticking as far as possible to single issue stories with threads of continuity.

That continuity is largely supplied by the presence of the Resurrection Crusade, introduced in issue #3, and a group of British satanists who debut in issue #4: The Damnation Army. Delano views the religious fundamentalism of the Crusade and the devil worshipers as "two sides of the same supernatural coin," both desiring control of humanity's collective soul. Constantine's role between them he likens to a sort of everyman. He's strengthened and advised by Zed, a punkette street artist of anarchic persuasion who later becomes his lover, but there is more to her than is originally revealed.

John Constantine gives Hellblazer a sting.

Issue #5 is the only story to occur outside Britain for the time being and it promises to be particularly bleak as Constantine journeys to Liberty, Iowa. It's a small isolated town with an aging population since the entire male youth was listed as missing in action during the Vietnam War. Constantine arrives at the same time as the sons of Liberty return, all dead, and believing Liberty to be the Vietnamese village they were attacking as they died. In order to provide a complete contrast for the following issue Delano describes #6 as "largely a black comedy." It concerns a political street gang of right-wing persuasion who make a slight error during a queer bashing patrol.

The exact circumstances of the notorious Newcastle Incident, mentioned in passing since Constantine's debut, will be revealed to anyone who pieces together the shreds of information imparted in the course of the first eight issues.

Delano doesn't intend to re-tell the story in its entirety, but there are direct reper-cussions in issue #7 as Constantine encounters the demon Nargal.

Throughout his appearances so far Constantine has been winging it to a large extent, but events over the next six months, particularly after issue #9's guest appearance by Swamp Thing, will see him emerge with an increased level of awareness and a sense of purpose that will enable him to have a greater influence on events. —FH—

HELLRIDER

Plotted and illustrated by JOE JUSKO, scripted by ARCHIE GOODWIN, edited by DAN CHICHESTER

one-shot, 48 full-color pages, squarebound, $3.25, from MARVEL EPIC COMICS

The post-holocaust starring the ex-biker/serviceman will be appearing this spring. Not much else to say, really.

HERO

Written by DAVID MICHELINIE, pencilled by STEVE PURCELL, inked by STEVE LEIALOHA, edited by ANN NOCENTI

3-issue mini-series, 48 full-color pages, squarebound, $3.25, monthly from MARVEL COMICS GROUP

What is about these titles that start with "hero"? We've listed *four* of the damned things issue after issue, and they *never* put out an issue. Well, that should change this time around, at least if David Michelinie has anything to do with it. "unless we all die!"

His book, succinctly titled *Hero*, has undergone two changes since its last appearance in these pages. First, it is now a three-issue squarebound series, rather than the six-issue newsstand format series as previously announced. Each issue will contain two chapters of the story. The second alteration is the addition of artist Steve Leialoha as the book's embellisher. Leialoha replaces Whilce Portacio, who has been tapped to illustrate Marvel's popular *Punisher* title.

Department of *deja vu*: *Hero* is a concept that examines just what it takes for someone to be a hero. It's the story of Cody Pace, a selfish, "Me generation" courier from New Jersey who one day wakes up in a very bizarre world called Perigrine Magi. While Cody is being forced to engage in a series of unusual adventures he'd honestly rather be back in Hoboken making car and condo payments.

Hero also features a quartet of intriguing supporting characters: Ort, a midget who frequently turns into a dragon; Ivory Darc, a beautiful political assassin; Jabot Wafloon, a horticulture gourmet; and Gaelen Piecekeeper, an archer with very stringent religious beliefs. —ME—

Joe Jusko's cover to the long-promised Hellrider.

HERO ALLIANCE

Written by KEVIN JUAIRE and DAVID CAMPITI, pencilled by RONALD LIM, inked by KEITH WILLIAMS, edited by ROGER McKENZIE

32 full-color pages, $1.95, newsstand distribution, bi-monthly from PIED PIPER PRESS

It's been a year since Pied Piper Graphic Album #1, *Hero Alliance* shipped, and almost a year since the title last hit the stands.

Now, hopefully, with the problems between Pied Piper and its distributors being worked out, the book will finally get a chance to be seen again.

At press time, the second issue was at the printer.

Upcoming issues will focus on the daughter of the Golden Guardsman, Kris and Victor. No attempt will be made to "power-down" these characters. After all, battle sequences are not and can not be the be all and end-all in writing.

Writers Juaire and Campiti will be going the other way. Victor will become more powerful, not less. He will be limited, apparently, only by his imagination in terms of what he can do.

For an easy handle, you can look at ***Hero Alliance*** as a mix of *Barney Miller* and *L.A. Law*. As a definite *ensemble* book, you expect to see relationships stressed and explored. Characterizations and "warm human bits" will then make your spine tingle. That is what this book is about.

Issue #2, "Easy Targets," finds Victor rebuilding the Guardsmen Complex as part of his plan to re-form the Guardmen. Then he realizes that the high visibility of the original HQ made it easier for Sepulchre to find and slaughter the original team weeks earlier. Some surviving original Guardmen return when they discover the Golden Guardman's son has turned bad. The Tawny Winters mystery will build over the next several issues.

Issue #3, "Like the Gods Themselves," features a super powered character whose unique ability is super speed comprehension. Unfortunately, while the

world seems, to him, to be moving in slow motion, he cannot make his body compensate. The story is an examination of the practicality of what makes for a hero.

Several "Victor" stories are on file, pending appropriate artists. These tales deal with his earlier years. —sw—

HERO SANDWICH

Co-written by DAN VADO and CHUCK AUSTEN
Illustrated by CHUCK AUSTEN; assisted by NORMAN FELCHLE

24 black-and-white pages, $1.75, they say monthly but not quite from SLAVE LABOR GRAPHICS

The vampire/psycho killer storyline comes to its conclusion at the end of #4, with a few surprising twists that should delight followers of the book. In this special 25-page issue, the mystery behind the vampire coven and their search for Andrew is finally revealed. "You see, the vampires are dying as a race and Andrew is the only one who can help them," explains Dan Vado, *Hero Sandwich* co-creator. "Naturally, this is something that Montclair, the vampire representative, was reluctant to reveal since it puts him in a vulnerable position. Rachel and Allison are pretty resourceful when it comes to getting information and eventually Montclair comes clean. At that point the Hero Sandwich crew must decide whether or not to turn Andrew over to the coven as per their agreement." Turn a sociopath serial killer loose again after finally cornering him? Could they do that? Vado just grins. "Sure, why not?"

With the conclusion of the vampire/psycho killer storyline, a few questions still remain unanswered. "And they'll stay unanswered for a while," laughed Chuck Austen, the other half of the *Hero Sandwich* creative team. "It's not that we don't want to answer those questions, we do. It's just that the little plot threads we leave dangling are a part of another major storyline that could run for several issues. Right now Dan and I would prefer to let that storyline simmer for a couple of months and concentrate on shorter stories of about one- or two-issue length."

The shorter stories that Austen and Vado have planned will tend to concentrate on each member of the Hero Sandwich team individually. "Character stories are something we've gotten a lot of requests for," Austen said. "And that's something Dan and I have been dying to explore in greater detail, the characters and their relationships to one another."

Issue #5 will focus on Silver Scorpion. Tired, bruised and just plain worn out, he decides to go home and visit his mom. His ordeal with Andrew has left him feeling old and somewhat useless, so he returns home in an effort to recapture some of his lost youth. In this issue we learn his real name, why he's called Scorpion, and what turned him into the lovable human being he is today.

Issue #6 will center on Richard and Lee. Melanie (the dancer from issue #1) is staying temporarily with Richard because Andrew's threat has left her shaken and afraid to go to her own home. During her stay, she slowly begins to learn about Richard and Lee, and how they relate to each other and to the rest of Hero Sandwich. But the door swings both ways, and as Melanie discovers more about this unusual group of individuals, it becomes apparent that she's keeping a few secrets of her own.

With issue #7, some of Melanie's secrets are revealed, creating a lot more questions that need to be answered. Specifically, what does she really do for a living, and why are there people following her? And why does it seem that Lee knows more about it all than he's letting on? Richard takes it upon himself to find the answers, drawn into the case by his natural curiosity and his burgeoning affection for Melanie.

Issue #8 backs off from the Melanie mystery for a moment and deals with the Scorpions return to the Bay Area. He drops in unexpectedly on Rachel, and Rachel is none too happy about it. "Scorpion tends to be a trouble magnet," said Vado. "He has a very colorful past that always seems to catch up to him at the worst possible time, and it's caught up to him in Rachel's livingroom."

Issue #9 drops us back into the Melanie mystery. As Richard gets closer to solving the puzzle, he begins to regret involving himself in the case, as he uncovers things about Melanie he'd rather not have known. By the time the mystery is solved, Richard is awash in conflicting emotions. The issue closes as Melanie is indicted for murder.

Early 1988 will also see the release of the Hero Sandwich graphic novel. It will be a compilation of the first four issues; material which is out of print or hard to find. There will also be some new artwork and features created expressly for this volume.

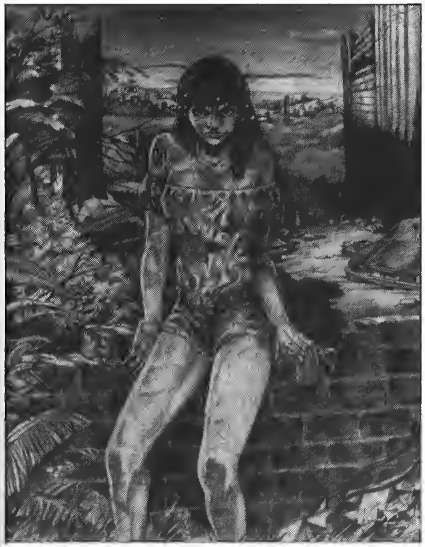
*Gee, I wonder what **Hero Sandwich** artist Chuck Austen enjoys drawing?*

HEROES

Written, illustrated, and edited by JOHN NORDLAND II

32 black-and-white pages, $2.00, bi-monthly from BLACKBIRD COMICS

The Olympian trilogy comprises the three issues slated to appear before July. In it, the heroes journey to the island raised by the ersatz god Jove and are brainwashed by him into staying on to become his new pantheon. When Ian and Angie finally arrive to rescue them a month later, they are rebuffed by the god-heroes, who have been rendered unable to differentiate between good and evil. Meanwhile, back home, their absence causes or worsens several problems, primarily in the love lives of the heroes.



*From **Heroes**, Angie—or rather, the other Angie.*

The back-up in issue #5 is a short horror story by Edd Vick that Nordland has illustrated, and the other two issues are likely to contain "Just Friends" by Martin E. Thomas.

But you knew that.

Nordland so far has brought out each issue of *Heroes* at the wrong time, exacerbating the money-pit he feels publishing has become. The first issue predated the black-and-white glut, and the second appeared when comics shops were cutting back on their orders. His proposal to go to color, applauded by those who have seen his work at conventions, is misinterpreted by distributors as an attempt to jump on the color bandwagon. "By the time I decide what to do, the market decides to do something else. I'll just have to print what I can afford to print when I'm ready." Therefore, the fifth issue and beyond will return to black-and-white, but Nordland stresses that he will be working to regularize the schedule. He is also considering a better quality enamel paper. —EV—

THE HOLO. BROTHERS

Written and illustrated by JIM ROHN; edited by GARY GROTH

5-issue mini-series; 32 black-and-white pages, price to be determined; bi-monthly from UPSHOT GRAPHICS/FANTAGRAPHICS BOOKS, INC.

The Holo. Brothers mini-series, titled *Wheels Within Wheels*, will be used to test the waters for an ongoing *Holo.* book. In *Wheels Within Wheels*, a threat to Prince Kevin splits the three brothers up. In the course of the five issues, we follow the brothers through three separate, but interweaving, storylines. How will it all resolve? I'm not tellin'. By the by, the series will also sport full-color painted covers by Rohn.

The back-up feature for the series will be *Lloyd Llewellyn* by the irrepressible Daniel Clowes. According to Clowes, the back-ups will be unrelated, independent six-pagers, featuring Lloyd in all sorts of wild and winky adventures. —JW—

HOLO. BROTHERS SPECIAL

Written and illustrated by JIM ROHN; edited by GARY GROTH

32 full-color pages, price to be determined; one-shot from UPSHOT GRAPHICS/FANTAGRAPHICS BOOKS, INC.

Slated for a May release, this special, entitled *Angst for the Memories*, is "about as close to an origin issue as you're gonna get," claims Rohn. The brothers get into a brawl and land in prison. Tequila Mockingbird goes off to try and get help. In the madness that ensues, we learn much of the brothers' history, and get caught up in a prison riot to boot! Miss it if you dare! —JW—

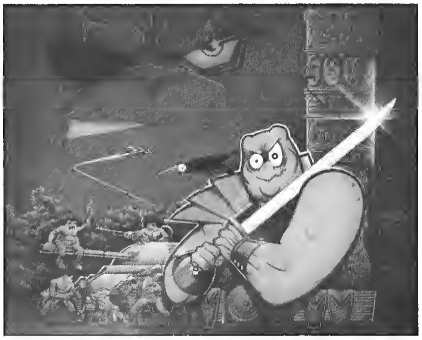
THE HONEYMOONERS

Written by ROBERT LOREN FLEMING; pencilled by WIN MORTIMER; inked by VINCE MUSACCHIA

32 full-color pages, $2.00; monthly from TRIAD PUBLISHING

In order to fit in the double-sized,

*Part of a **Holo. Brothers** cover by Jim Rohn.*



Ralph thinks he may be going to the moon

squarebound Special Christmas issue (#3), the story "In the Pink" has been delayed to #4, scheduled for January release. In this original tale by Robert Loren Fleming, Ralph decides he's going a little gray around the temples and buys some hair dye; when Ed helps him to apply it, though, he gets it mixed up with some pink dye Alice bought to dye her shoes.

In order to give Fleming a breather after the Christmas issue, **#5** is a fill-in by writer Tom West, in which Ralph and Ed happen upon the abandoned set of a typical '50s Hollywood sci-fi movie, and immediatly become convinced that aliens have landed. This one should give a whole new meaning to the phrase, "To the Moon!" Issue **#6** will feature another story by Fleming (the idea of using adaptations of existing *Honeymooners* scripts having apparently been dropped) but he's not sure what the subject will be, preferring to keep his work on the title "fast and loose." He would say, however, that there are plans for a double-size summer issue, which would take place on Coney Island during a wild weekend.

Old pro Win Mortimer has been tapped to pencil the series, leaving Vince Musacchia that much more time to work on the inking and coloring. —JC—

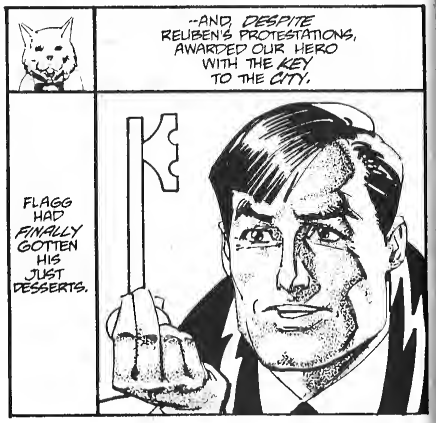
HOWARD CHAYKIN'S AMERICAN FLAGG!

Written by HOWARD CHAYKIN & MINDY NEWELL
illustrated by MIKE VOSBURG, HOWARD CHAYKIN, RICHARD ORY, TONY Van De WALLE, JOHN MOORE
edited by RICK OLIVER and HOWARD CHAYKIN

32 full-color pages, $1.75; monthly from FIRST COMICS

Before getting into Howard Chaykin's plans for the new, revitalized ***American Flagg!***, we should amend the ***Flagg!*** entry in last summer's *Preview Special*. Then, it seemed that Chaykin wasn't the least bit thrilled to be returning to his highly-acclaimed creation, and cited reasons why he shouldn't be. Now, he says he is "very excited about the new ***Flagg!***" He's also very pleased that First asked him to return to the title, after a year of watching people "pissing in the gene pool of what I created." Their work

*From the new **American Flagg!***



on the series will be "brusquely ignored" as Chaykin begins rebuilding the series.

In order to revamp ***Flagg!***, Chaykin has built up a staff of assistants and collaborators. The breakdown of work is as follows: Chaykin produces each plot in detail—every ***Flagg!*** story will cover four issues—and then passes it on to artist Mike Vosburg to do thumb-nail breakdowns. Mindy Newell takes the plot and the breakdowns and writes the script, followed by Ken Bruzenak who letters. *But then*, final art is provided by Chaykin, Mike Vosburg, Richard Ory, Tony Van De Walle and John Moore, the last of whom is also the colorist and assistant editor.

O.K., on to story details. Several characters will be heading for the U.S.S.R. and, to mark the shift, ***Flagg!***'s logo will undergo a slight change. Reuben Flagg's mission is to teach Soviet citizens how to be like Americans of the 1950s. Chaykin explains that the Soviet people have had freedom thrust upon them abruptly. Their country has gone from being a military fascist state to that of a military consumerist state. He underpins the above, though, by saying that what is being presented is basically a cartoon version of the U.S.S.R. More than that I cannot really say except Raul the cat is sure to be in the thick of things.

Chaykin is committed to the new/old ***Flagg!*** for at least a year and makes clear that he has no intention of ever allowing the title to be affected by his departure the way it was following the end of his first tenure. Perhaps every cover should bear the words "Normal service is resumed." —PC—

I'M AGE

Written and illustrated by JEFF JONES

one-shot; 48 full-color pages, squarebound; $3.25; from MARVEL EPIC COMICS

National Lampoon readers will remember Jeff Jones's lovely and usually baffling series of one-pagers featuring a nubile young philosophical wench. Well, they're all being packaged as a one-shot from the Marvel Epic department, coming your way this spring. Don't forget to bone up on Aristotle first. —JC—

ICON DEVIL

Written, illustrated and edited by NEIL HANSEN

12-issue series; 32 black-and-white pages; $1.60; bi-monthly from SPIDER COMICS (Mature Readers)

Sadly, ***Icon Devil*** has entered limbo. Due to problems prying funds from distributors, creator Neil Hansen has put the book on hold while he establishes something of a name for himself. He hopes to be able to, possibly, interest a major company in the book if he cannot make a go of it himself. In that way he would avoid the aforementioned problems in dealing with distributors.

In the meantime Hansen is doing back-ups for ***Nexus*** and ***Badger*** and a rumor from a reliable source says he will be doing some work on ***Whisper*** under a pseudonym.

Hansen stresses that, one way or another, he plans to complete ***Icon Devil***. "It's a story I've really worked hard on, and it's a story that I really want to tell." —SW—

IN THE DAYS OF THE ACE ROCK 'N' ROLL CLUB

Written and drawn by EDDIE CAMPBELL

28 black-and-white pages, $1.95; one-shot from HARRIER COMICS/NEW WAVE

The Ace Rock 'n' Roll Club is a never seen spot frequented by the various characters populating the three slice-of-life vignettes reprinted here. United through a love of old rock 'n' roll music, their mid-'70s Southend serves Campbell for an exploration of tribal mentality.

The peculiar offhand relationship betwen two friends and the girl they both sleep with forms the basis of the first story, while the second recounts a girl's view of her hedonistic life as related in the confession box. Rounding out the book is an age-old ritual observed as boys meet girls on the pier.

These stories originally appeared in limited circulation small press comics and will be ten years old by the time that they see print here, so Campbell has constructed a new framing sequence reflecting his current circumstances and musing on the remarkable naivete of the stories in hindsight. —PH—

THE INCREDIBLE HULK

Written by PETER DAVID; pencilled by TODD McFARLANE; edited by BOB HARRAS

32 four-color pages; 75 cents; newsstand distribution; monthly from MARVEL COMICS

Things will move headlong toward a climax this spring as the Leader's plot

*Todd McFarlane's dynamic interpretation of the **Incredible Hulk***

and the entire Gamma Bomb storyline reach their dramatic conclusion. Bruce Banner, Betty Banner, Rick Jones and SHIELD agent Clay Quartermain will try to stop the Leader from destroying a town with the Gamma bomb—but will they succeed?

Issue #345—the concluding chapter—will be a double-size issue, with an epilogue in issue #346. The Bruce Banner Hulk will, to all appearances, die in #345, and will not appear in #346. But in issue #347

INFINITY, INC.

Written by ROY and DANN THOMAS; pencilled by VINCE ARGONDEZZI, MIKE BAIR, and LOU MANNA; inked by TONY DeZUNIGA and BOB DOWNS; edited by ROY THOMAS and MARK WAID

32 four-color pages, $1.75; monthly from DC COMICS, INC.

Nuklon will propose to the very pregnant Fury in issue #49 of *Infinity, Inc.*, in the second part of his origin story begun in #48. Complications arise when the second Sandman enters the picture from his dream dimension. It seems he's also in love with Fury, and doesn't plan to let Nuklon have her. This issue will be pencilled by Vince Argondezzi, with inks by Tony DeZuniga and Sam Kieth, and leads into the double-sized issue #50.

In issue #50, the Thomases will drawn on some of the old stories from the late '40s *Justice Society* stories, and the second issue of *Justice League of America*. It seems that Sandman's dream dimension has a portal into Grimm-world, called alternatively in the past either "Fairyland" or "Magicland."

When the ogres and trolls and other evil magical beings decide to invade the Earth through Sandman's dimension, it's up to Infinity, Inc. and the Sandman to stop them. The modern chapters of the book will be by Vince Argondezzi, Tony DeZuniga and Sam Kieth, while Mike Bair will pencil and ink a 15-page Justice Society flashback. Replacing the non-existent Golden Age Wonder Woman in the JSA lineup will be Miss America, a character who will play a greater role in upcoming months of *Infinity, Inc.*

From issue #51 on, several plotlines will come up, although their exact order is uncertain at press time—especially since #53 is the final issue. Anyway, the proposed order is listed here:

The long-awaited resolution to the Helix story, wherein Helix must deal with their creator/arch-enemy Dr. Love. But will they do it with or without the help of Mr. Bones and Wildcat?

Then the new version of the Injustice Society. Injustice Unlimited, will be reintroduced. Hazzard, Icicle, and Artemis will be joined by three newer characters to replace the Wizard, the Fiddler, and Shade.

Major changes in the team's lineup are also promised, possibly as early as #49. "There will be a number of characters changing in the team," says writer Roy Thomas, "either leaving of their own volition, or being carried out on a shield (i.e. in a body bag)." Thomas also promises at least one new character on the team though.

Mike Bair will pencil #51-53, to be inked by Bob Downs. There will be several back-up features, or integrated chapters, however, by new artist Lou Manna, to relieve the deadline pressure on Bair. —AM—

Infinity Inc. "Oh no! And after this, they're cancelling the book!"

INSANE!

Written and illustrated by VARIOUS; edited by RANDY STRADLEY

32 black-and-white pages; $1.75; quarterly from DARK HORSE COMICS

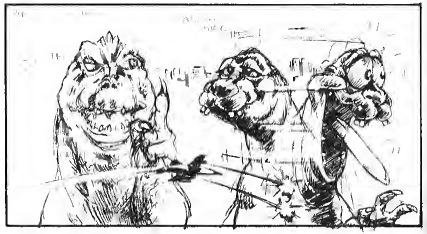
Based on the concepts behind the early *Mad* comic/magazine, *Insane!* from Dark Horse will bring straight ahead parody out quarterly, beginning this December. "We plan to do TV, movie, comics, and other genre parodies," says publisher Mike Richardson. "We won't be doing the mean-spirited acid-tongued parody books that we've been seeing lately. These are somewhat affectionate tributes, but with enough bite and parody to make them funny."

Issue #1 will contain the lead story of "The Unhappy X-Tra Men," a team of mutants which gains too many members and so many spin-offs that its members start tripping over each other. The first story is written and drawn by Dave Schwartz. Then, the *Wacky Squirrel* team of Mike Richardson and Jim Bradrick bring up the misadventures of "Clodzilla," a country bumpkin who comes to Tokyo to visit his cousin and his girlfriend Bodzilla! The final story of the issue will be the adventures of "Dimjack," a strange man living in an even stranger city. "Dimjack" is by *Munden's Bar* artist Hilary Barta.

The second issue, due out in the spring, will contain some undecided-on features. "We're doing a story about a certain cowled crusader, the return of Super-Duper Man, and oh, so much more."

If sales are good enough, *Insane!* will move to a higher frequency of publication. *Insane #1* premieres in late December. —AM—

From Insane!, a satire of Godzilla



IRON MAN

Co-plotted by DAVID MICHELINIE and BOB LAYTON; written by DAVID MICHELINIE; pencilled by MARK BRIGHT; then JACKSON GUICE; inked by BOB LAYTON; edited by MARK GRUENWALD

32 four-color pages; 75 cents; newsstand distribution; monthly from MARVEL COMICS GROUP

Issue #230 is the penultimate chapter of the "Armor Wars" storyline, and it concludes with — the death of Iron Man!

In *Iron Man #230*, the Avenger must battle a new armored foe called Firepower. This villain was created by Edwin Kord, the ex-con businessman who has appeared in *Iron Man* before. The construction of Firepower's armor was funded by the United States government, ostensibly as a prototype for use in the military. The government also has an ulterior motive for designing the Firepower weaponry: it's their secret weapon in case any of the nation's super-heroes ever "get out of line," says writer David Michelinie.

With his gutsy rampage spawned by the misuse of his stolen technology, Iron Man's recent behavior is interpreted as being "out of line." This leads to a battle royale between the Armored Avenger and Firepower, and Iron Man does not survive the fight.

"Iron Man dies in #230," quips Michelinie, "but Tony Stark doesn't."

Now that he has successfully destroyed Iron Man, Edwin Kord unleashes an assault against the financial empire of Tony Stark, beginning in #231. Kord orders Firepower to attack Stark's various holdings. This causes a major embarrassment to the U.S. government, who funded the Firepower project in the first place. With Firepower on a melee, a *new* Iron Man rises from the ashes to tackle him.

Issue #232 features a very special guest penciller: Barry Windsor-Smith. This story is a nightmare sequence where Tony Stark dreams that he is stalked by what Michelinie describes as a "shadowy, horrible, mutated armor-thing, which in essence is his guilt over the use of his stolen technology." Based on an idea by the guest artist, the story is plotted by Michelinie, Bob Layton, and Windsor-Smith, and scripted by Michelinie.

Jackson Guice becomes the new penciller on *Iron Man* beginning with issue #233, where Tony Stark introduces the new Iron Man to the public with a massive media blitz. Iron Man is now the corporate symbol for Stark Enterprises, even appearing on the company's letterhead stationery, and engages in numerous functions to rebuild his credibility as a super-hero.

A number of sub-plots will be explored beginning in #233. Stark will resume his role as playboy, which his obsession with the "Armor Wars" forced him to ignore. Jim "Rhodey" Rhodes and Marcy Pearson cross a new bridge in their tumultuous relationship. And Ant-Man returns in an effort to help save Stark Enterprises from the wiles of Edwin Kord.

The new Iron Man armor will resemble the original red and gold suit, but with some new powers and technology added for good measure. The cumbersome shoulderpads are being dropped, so Iron Man will no longer look like a cousin of the Transformers. Michelinie and Layton toyed with the notion of coloring this new armor red and *black*, until other Marvel staffers noted that the new color scheme made the hero look villainous. (Whatever happened to striking fear into the hearts of evildoers?)

Issue #234 will "probably" guest-star Spider-Man, as Stark visits New York City to establish an East Coast headquarters for his corporation.

And just who is this new Iron Man? Only Rhodey knows for sure... and he's not telling! —ME—

IT'S SCIENCE! WITH DR. RADIUM

Written and illustrated by SCOTT SAAVEDRA

24 black-and-white pages; $1.75; somewhat irregularly from SLAVE LABOR GRAPHICS

"I've got a confession to make," Scott Saavedra, writer and artist of *It's Science* said recently.

"I don't know what I'm doing. I have no idea what will appear in each issue of *It's Science* until I'm actually working on it."

When asked about the information printed in previous *Preview Specials* he revealed, "I just made the stuff up. I came up with some cool story titles and stuck an issue number in front of it and *voila*, instant preview info."

Although it sounds a bit backwards, Saavedra defends the practice: "Scientists work that way. First they come up with a theory and then they try to prove it."

With this in mind what theories, uh, stories can we look forward to? "Well, issue #9 features a story called 'The Substance.' Issue #10's lead is entitled

In the pursuit of It's Science

'Passing Strange,' Gaining on Weird,' and in issue #11 I give 'A Few Facts about Fred'."

And the Tales of Science back-ups?

"Gone, but not forgotten. At least as far as *It's Science* is concerned. Chuck (Austen), Basilio (Amaro), Dan (Vado), and I (Me) will do some new tales but they will probably appear in a separate trade edition later in '88. In the mean time, I'll be featuring some very special material I've come across. The first of it will appear in #7. To say any more would spoil the surprise."

Really?

"Hey, have I ever lied to you?"—CG—

ITCHY PLANET

Written and illustrated by VARIOUS, edited by LEONARD RIFAS

32 black-and-white pages $2.25, quarterly from FANTAGRAPHICS BOOKS

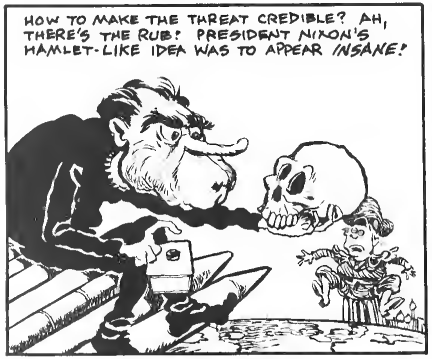
According to editor Leonard Rifas, "*Itchy Planet* is a new comic book forum for cartoonists to examine the ongoing, multi-faceted world crisis." Each issue of the quarterly comic will feature a mix of first-person comics stories, analytical pieces, and reviews and articles on comics that show political concerns.

The first issue, subtitled "Crisis on Finite Earth," is a nuclear-escalation issue, and includes work by Mark (*Real Life*) Zingarelli, Larry Gonick (*Cartoon History of the Universe*), Norman Dog, Michael Dougan, and Rifas. Also included is an article on diverse comics about AIDS. The cover is by David Suter, and the issue is scheduled for March release.

The second issue, released in June, will include work by Matt Groening, Lynda Barry, Joyce Farmer, Trina Robbins, and R. Diggs.

"Topics of future issues," says Rifas, "will include 'The Politics of Comic Books,' the elections, urban ecology, and much else."—GJ—

Larry Gonick's strip from **Itchy Planet**.



JAKE THRASH

Written by BARRY BLAIR and DAVID COOPER, illustrated by DAVID COOPER, edited by MIKE CHARBONNEAU

3 issue mini-series, 24 full-color pages, $2.00, monthly from AIRCEL PUBLISHING

This mini-series is set in a futuristic world that may or may not be Earth. A war between two continent sized cities has been going on for generations. No one can remember why they are at war and, for the most part, nobody cares. It just goes on.

Radiation victims wander aimlessly through bombed-out areas and sleep in bomb shelters. Shell-shock is a way of life. Only teen-agers seem to be immune to the effects of the war on the decadent and battle-torn society around them. Actually, they have merely given up and accepted the prevailing insanity.

And so, when the air raid sirens sound, no one even wonders what life is like on the other side.

This unpleasant world is where Jake Thrash lives and works. Thrash is a mystery man. He may (or may not) be immortal. He may (or may not) be the burn-out he seems. He is, certainly, a man with a hidden past who works as a private investigator—taking on the jobs that no one else wants (or can handle). He lives out of his car and comes across as morally just, but more than a little strange.

According to co-writer Barry Blair, "The tone here is more than a bit like *Blade Runner* with bits of *Brazil* thrown in. There is a lot of black humor. The overall effect we hope to achieve is something that will be similar to the feel of London during the Blitz in WWII."

Co-writer and artist for *Jake Thrash* is David Cooper, late of *Icarus*. Says Blair, "In the brief time since *Icarus*, Dave's art has improved dramatically. It's almost like he's gained ten years of experience in just a few short months.

"Also, with color, his art just seems so much better. Anyone who liked his art on *Icarus* will love it on *Jake Thrash*. And anyone who didn't like the art on *Icarus* will be amazed at the growth and maturity Dave has shown on *Jake Thrash*."

While the series has to deal with a war that has involved nukes, and a society in which there is much corruption and internal crime, another interesting tidbit surfaces: the book's villain is apparently known to Thrash of old. And he, too, just might be immortal.

In short, then, the series deals with the decadence, courage, terror, resignation and evils that surface in an environment of constant war. Then it adds humor, characterization and mystery to the mix.

Jake Thrash is scheduled to begin publication in January, and if sales warrant—it could become an ongoing series.—SW—

THE JAM

Written and illustrated by BERNIE MIREAULT and PIERRE FOURNIER, edited by BERNIE MIREAULT

32 black-and-white pages $1.75, bi-monthly from MATRIX GRAPHIC SERIALS

Due to circumstances beyond Matrix's control (you argue with Ma Nature), The Jam's title was held back once again. With any luck at all, we should see the Jammer in action, in his own book, by the time this *Preview Special* hits the stands.

For those of you who don't still have the *Summer Special* to refer to, a brief recap of the basic storyline for the first several issues of *The Jam*.

The story takes place following the *Jam Special* that was released last year. Several new characters, including a lady detective named Marble, will be introduced. Marble will get the Jammer involved in an international situation involving terrorism. She will also help the Jammer develop an income from his efforts (we all know how rich the average masked guy isn't.)

The terrorist organization F.L.A.R.K. will be The Jammer's prime target. He and the good lady, Marble, have been assigned to protect some Arab dignitaries from their tender mercies.

While the first few issues will develop the relationship between The Jammer and Marble, and their efforts to thwart F.L.A.R.K., it must be said, in all fairness, that the book will not be entirely serious. The infamous Mireault humor that ran through *MacKenzie Queen* and the Jammer's back-up stories in *New Triumph* will be ever present.

Pierre Fournier's series, *Mighty Wrestlers*, will be the back-up feature in *The Jam*. Fournier, who also doubles as Matrix's production manager, has done the series in a whimsical, European style.

Mighty Wrestlers is set in a time when wrestling has supplanted soccer as the world's favorite sport. Genetically enhanced behemoths with spare parts get into the ring to entertain millions.

Mireault refers to the series as "machine-washable violence."

The storyline will focus on one wrestler who has used his enhanced abilities outside the ring and been banished from the sport. It doesn't matter that it was a moral situation and that he thwarted a crime: what matters is that he used his abilities outside the ring.

Now he must ply his trade in the world of "Black Market Wrestling" in order to make a living.

The Jam should be on the stands in December. A one-shot special will be coming from Comico in May [*see next entry*].—SW—

THE JAM: SUPER COOL COLOR INJECTED TURBO ADVENTURE FROM HELL

Written, pencilled, and inked by BERNIE MIREAULT, edited by DIANA SCHUTZ

one-shot, 40 four-color pages, $2.00, from COMICO

Actually, the title of this special book featuring Bernie Mireault's enigmatic urban hero says it all (or most of it). The story is about a day in the life of The Jam, which just happens to involve a bank teller from hell. Confused? Creator Bernie Mireault explains:

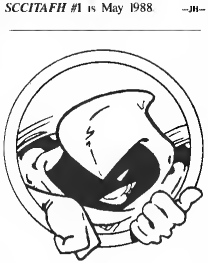
"First there's a dream sequence, then the Jammer wakes up with his girlfriend, and things get romantic; but it's the day the rent is due, so he goes to the bank and the teller from Hell gives him trouble when he tries to cash a cheque, and then bank robbers appear, and the police chase him (Jam) even though he tackles one of the robbers on the way out of the bank, and he rides to the police station in the back of the truck, and then he tries to appeal to the crowd of witnesses for help but gets no response. He becomes very disappointed in humanity," says Mireault, "but then things get better."

Mireault describes the Jam as "a strong person with a twisted sense of humor." Like the regular *Jam* series from Matrix Graphics, *Super Cool Color Injected Turbo Adventure From Hell #1* is made up of light-hearted vignettes, with each piece of the puzzle telling a little humorous "home truth."

The colorful Jammer will be even more colorful in this book. "The panels will be painted like animation cels, resulting in intense, flat color," says Mireault. He adds that while he's enjoying doing the special issue for Comico immensely, the regular *Jam* series will continue to be published by Matrix Graphics.

The tentative release date for *SCCITAFH #1* is May 1988.—JH—

From the **Jam** *special*.



The cantankerous **Jaxon**.

JAXON

Written, pencilled and inked by JAMES GRUMMETT, edited by PAT DAVIDSON

24 color pages, $1.50, monthly from VANGUARD COMICS

Welcome to Seaguard — the roughest, toughest, dirtiest, sleaziest town in all of the Rashi-ding Empire. It's also the only place where Jaxon feels right at home. That's because in Seaguard, the strong and the healthy can survive, but only the clever can make a profit doing so.

Meet Jaxon — the most cantankerous, foul-tempered, little brawler to "grace" the genre of fantasy comics since—well—since *ever*.

Editor Pat Davidson cautions, "Don't be expecting the Gallant Knight In Shining Armor, or for that matter, the Proud-But-Noble Barbarian. Jaxon is a no-holds-barred mercenary to the core." But it's all offered up in a tongue-in-cheek manner. James Grummett mixes elements of classical fantasy with his off-the-wall brand of humor to create a sword-and-sorcery epic which actually has very little in the way of sorcery, and not too much heroic swordsplay either.

Jaxon will be making his debut—at Seaguard and at comic shops near you—this summer.

JEZEBEL JADE

Written by WILLIAM MESSNER-LOEBS, illustrated by ADAM KUBERT, edited by DIANA SCHUTZ

3-issue limited series, 32 full-color pages, $1.50, monthly from COMICO

Jonny Quest fans take note: that feminine woman of adventure and mystique, Jezebel Jade, has gotten her own mini-series for 1988. The story, which takes place in the past, begins with Jezebel's main man Race Bannon, as he embarks on a career as a secret agent. He travels to Hong Kong to find a kidnapped American scientist who has developed a brain stimulator drug which prolongs life. Race discovers that everyone is after this drug, and that he is without allies.

Meanwhile, Jezebel Jade, who is in disguise working for someone else is drawn together with Race, and the duo find themselves working against the whole Hong Kong underworld. During all of this, they also discover that an ancient relic has entered the city, and this complicates the search for the scientist. Writer Bill Loebs hesitates to give much more than that away in the story. The artwork is being done by Adam Kubert, who has worked on *Jonny Quest* before.—ES—

JONNY QUEST

Written by WILLIAM MESSNER-LOEBS, pencilled by MARC HEMPEL, inked by MARK WHEATLEY, edited by DIANA SCHUTZ

32 full-color pages, $1.75, monthly from COMICO

The new JQ continues going strong in 1988. Writer Bill Loebs says that he will be starting on his third year of scripts, and that he has the ideas for another year right behind. Because he is so far ahead on scripts, Loebs was not able to put a specific issue number to each story, but offered the following plotlines for the new year.

In one episode, Dr. Quest will be lost in a sandstorm and meet a man from the future, and will help solve a crime which will not be committed for 30 centuries. Another one examines Race's past, and how he happened to leave home, and how he is put together emotionally. One two part episode will detail how the Quests travel to a Pacific island where a complete middle European kingdom has been recreated around the turn of the century, and it turns out that Jonny is an exact lookalike for the crown prince. This episode is entitled, "The Prisoners of Startbrow." In another, we will see what Loebs wickedly describes as the

Jonny by Hempel and Wheatley

"finally Jonny gets lost in the woods story."

Loebs also promises a new Bandit episode, in which the canine cut-up gets lost and befriends an old lady on the street. The two then help capture a serial killer. In another episode, Kathy Martin will take Jonny and Hadji on a day of her rounds as a social worker. Race also will start his own private detective agency, while everyone else is out of the city, and is hired by the captain of a flying saucer to find a piece of alien metal which can destroy the world. Loebs says that these are just your run-of-the-mill Jonny Quest stories. Lastly, Loebs promises that there will be a story at some point which he intends to draw.

Bill Loebs points out that although he will continue to have the regular art team of Marc Hempel and Mark Wheatley, there will not be strong continuity links between the stories, although he does believe the character relationships are consistent, and are growing. ***Jonny Quest*** fans should also be on the look out for the ***Jezebel Jade*** mini-series that will be appearing in the spring, and which can be found previewed right before this one. —SW—

JUDGE DREDD

Written and illustrated by VARIOUS, edited by BOB KEENAN

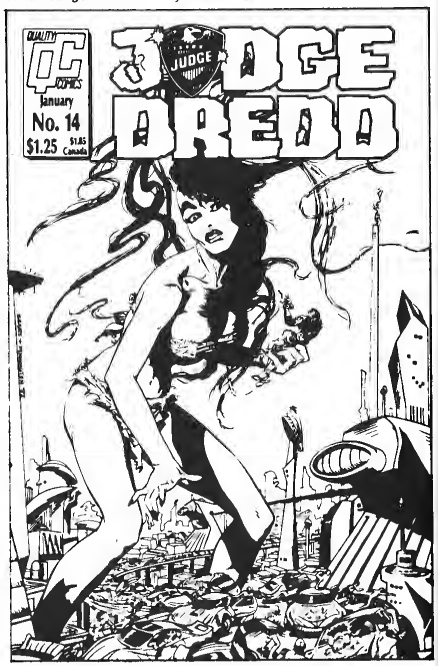
32 four-color pages, $1.25, newsstand distribution, monthly from QUALITY COMICS

Issue #14: It's the busy season for Dredd. He's got to track down a rogue judge who's escaped his sentence, find the monsters of Mega-City One, and put down an attack of fifty-foot woman! And you thought you had it tough! Art and stories by Brian Bolland, Jim Baikie, Kevin O'Neill, John Howard and T.B. Howard. It also boasts a cover by Bart Sears.

In issue #15, a Psi-Judge has a terrifying vision of the future destruction of Mega-City One. To stop a crime yet to be committed, Judge Dredd and Psi-Judge Anderson must travel 13 years into the future. Will they be in time to save the "City of the Damned"? This issue was written and illustrated by John Wagner and Alan Grant, and was again blessed with a Bart Sears cover.

In issue #16, we see that justice is blind, and so is Dredd as his eyes are destroyed by the one called "The Mutant" in part two of "City of the Damned." After being sent 13 years into the future to prevent the destruction of Mega-City One, Dredd and Psi-Judge Anderson find themselves fighting an old enemy in a new form. Hopeless despair and death, written and illustrated by T.B. Grover and Steve Dillon. —MSM—

*A new **Judge Dredd** cover by Bart Sears.*



JUGHEAD

Written and drawn by VARIOUS, edited by VICTOR GORELICK

32 four-color pages, 75 cents, newsstand distribution, bi-monthly from ARCHIE COMIC PUBLICATIONS

This title presents another chance for the completist to get in on the ground floor while collecting a comic that has actually been around nearly forty years. The character of Archie's pal underwent extensive revision in 1987, and he got a new first issue to celebrate. Juggie will still be "different," but he'll no longer be the one-dimensional character he was, with hamburgers at one end of his "like list" and girls at the other.

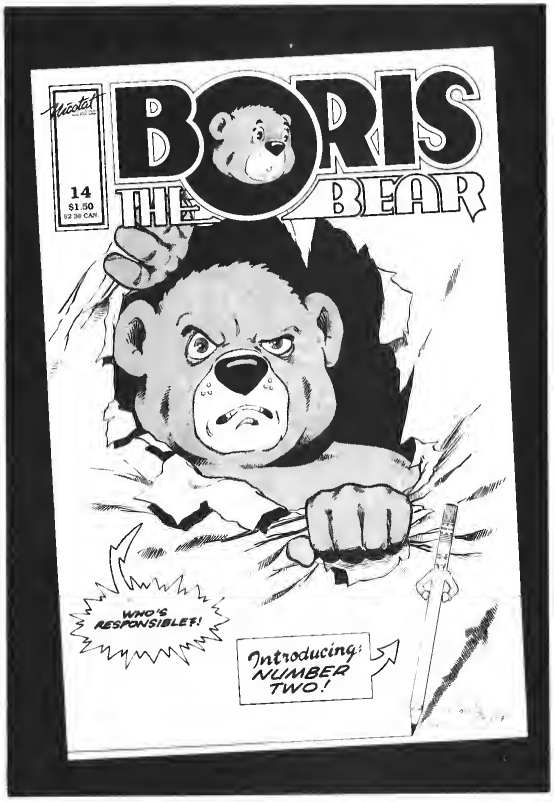
What does 1988 have in store for what inker Tom Moore calls "The Mr. Spock of Archie Comics"? A girlfriend, perhaps—in fact, maybe a rivalry between two! Will Big Ethel finally get her man, or do the writers have other candidates in mind? Only a faithful reading of this

WHAT DO YOU MEAN YOU DON'T READ QUALITY COMICS?

JUDGE DREDD
HALO JONES
SAM SLADE - ROBO-HUNTER
SCAVENGERS
SLAINE THE BESERKER
STRONTIUM DOG
ROGUE TROOPER
TIME TWISTERS
2000AD PRESENTS

What sort of a person reads a Quality Comic? The kind that wouldn't want to get on the wrong side of Judge Dredd! There are 9 full color monthly books, featuring the very finest in British comic art and story with people like Alan Moore, Dave Gibbons, Brian Bolland, Ian Gibson, Alan Grant, Pat Mills, and Carlos Ezquerra. Unless you'd like to spend the next 10 years in an Iso-Cube counting the hairs on your forearm, be a good citizen and start your own investigation of the Quality line! Dredd will be glad you did!

QUALITY COMICS P.O. Box 4569 • Toms River, New Jersey 08754
The International Comic Company



BORIS THE BEAR #14

"THE DEBUT OF EVIL NUMBER TWO!"

PLOT AND ART BY ***JAMES DEAN SMITH***
SCRIPT AND COVER COLORS BY ***STEVE MATTSSON***
LETTERED BY ***JOHN WORKMAN***

ON SALE ***MONTHLY*** FROM NICOTAT COMICS

new/old title will tell.

Far from the nerdy imbecile you'd expect of someone with a name like "Jughead," the new Juggie will be portrayed as musically talented, intelligent, and all "round cool—much more in tune with the times than the old-look misogynist who thinks of nothing but food.

See the listing for Jughead's pal, ***Archie***, for names of creators whose work will appear in this title. —BM—

JUST FRIENDS

Written and illustrated by MARTIN E. THOMAS, edited by JOHN NORDLAND II

24 four-color pages (or maybe not), $2.00; bi-monthly from BLACKBIRD COMICS

Finally due this spring is ***Just Friends***. It is the story of seven youths who split an alien stone and the power it bestows—power enough to run a sun. It had been carried to Earth in a last ditch effort to keep it from the hands of an insane ruler. The origin story, essentially the first four issues, tells of the friends' efforts to learn to use their powers while facing an alien warfleet.

Depending on the reception to the color version of ***Heroes***, Thomas's book may be converted to black-and-white (with a concomitant rise in the number of pages). Publisher Nordland praises his work in both monochrome and color. His airbrushed color work can be found on display soon in the third ***Duncan and Mallory*** from Starblaze. —EV—

JUSTICE

Written by PETER DAVID, pencilled by LEE WEEKS, edited by HOWARD MACKIE

32 four-color pages, 75 cents; newsstand distribution; monthly from MARVEL COMICS GROUP

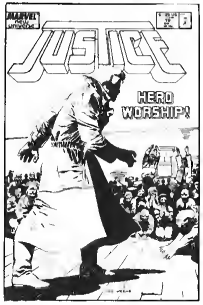
Justice continues his crusade to hunt down paranormals he perceives as "evil." When he locates one, he disintegrates him, leaving only the head and hands for identification. He also leaves an image of blind justice in the dust, thus creating the legend of the Justice Killer.

Justice is near Pittsburgh when it is destroyed, and the ensuing hurricane sucks him toward the Pitt. While wandering through the devastation, he meets an agent of the National Security Council who tries to recruit Justice, but the paranormal declines.

Upon leaving the region Justice encounters a paranormal who has formed his own cult. When Justice kills him, the followers begin to worship Justice himself.

He attends the rock concert to benefit the victims of the Pitt, Pitt Aid, where he fights the self-proclaimed Protector of All Paranormals. Justice is then captured by the police, who turn him over to the National Security Council. This time they aren't going to take "no" for an answer.

New artist on Justice: Lee Weeks.



JUSTICE LEAGUE INTERNATIONAL

Plotted by KEITH GIFFEN, scripted by J.M. DeMATTEIS, pencilled by KEVIN MAGUIRE, inked by AL GORDON, edited by ANDY HELFER

32 four-color pages, 75 cents; newsstand distribution; monthly from DC COMICS INC.

Issue #12 of DC's best-selling title will contain the complete and total revelations about Maxwell Lord. The new League's founder seems to have a shady past, and none of them really trust him. Will they trust him when they find out the truth? And where did that Ace robot that the Royal Flush Gang used in issue #4 come from anyhow? (I know Lord's secret! Doesn't that make me feel just a wee bit superior to you?) "When this issue is over, the reader should discover that they've just finished the first Justice League story," says plotter Keith Giffen.

"It has been one big 12-part story, and all the plot threads have led to Rome. \I mean this issue."

The next three issues will have fill-in art teams, but Giffen says not to worry, because fan-favorite Kevin Maguire is just resting his pencilling hand for upcoming stories. "He's not leaving the book," shouts Giffen. "I want to make that really plain. He's not leaving the book."

Issue #13 will be the first part of a ***Suicide Squad/Justice League International*** cross-over, which will be concluded in ***Suicide Squad*** #13 (quick, skip over to that preview after you've read this one!). Keith Giffen will pencil this issue by himself, with Al Gordon inking. One of the major members of the League will be leaving the book, very angrily. When the Suicide Squad tries to rescue Nemesis from a Soviet Gulag, the Justice League must stop them. But some of the Squad's members are ex-Leaguers themselves, such as Vixen. What now? And where do the new Rocket Red's loyalties lie when back in his own country? Will he help the League, the Squad, or neither?

Issues #14 and #15 will be a two-part story with science fiction overtones. "It's outer-spacey, slightly cosmic, and tongue-in-cheek," says Giffen. A new villain called Manga Khan—sorry to intrude here for a moment, but I think I should explain that name for those of you who can't comprehend some of the in-jokes perpetrated in this book. "Manga" is the Japanese word for "comic books," as you'd all know if you read those Eclipse and First Comics adaptations. "Khan" is pronounced like the word "con." Therefore, they now have a villain called (obstensibly) "Comic Con." Anyhow, I just thought that. What's that, Kim?

"Get out of the preview, Mangels."

Right. Okay. I'm getting. Sheesh. Boy, you try to be helpful. Where was I? Oh yeah. There's a new villain called Manga Khan, who represents an intergalactic bartering company. When the company comes to Earth, they propose that Earth give them some of the green-oxygen-producing plants that they need to survive, in exchange for whatever the Earth wants. Then they give Earth a time limit to decide in. "Of course, the United Nations gets involved, starts arguing, and blows the deadline. This bartering company is used to dealing with planets with only one government, and they cannot afford to have a planet fall into the hands of their competitors. If you say no, they'll rape your planet, and take everything." Women too? Anyhow, the Justice League International gets involved in this exchange, and go off to do what they do best: argue. In issue #14, two female characters from the Global Guardians will join: Icemaiden and Green Flame. And in issue #15, another of the major members leaves, fed up with the League.

Call them secret agents, call them Double-O-zeros, but don't call them *Bond*. That's the theme of #16 and part of #17, wherein the team supreme behind the ***Justice League International*** (including the return or the prodigal penciller Kevin Maguire) spoof the *James Bond* movies we've come to know and love. I guess you could say that the League gets bonded this issue, huh? Gosh, does this mean bond age covers? Bob Overstreet, are you reading?

Giffen then plans to have either a "Day In The Lives" type story, or another intergalactic space menace. "Somewhere soon, Guy Gardner realizes what he really is, and returns to the Guy Gardner we all know and loathe." Giffen also notes that the cross-continuity between this book and ***Captain Atom*** is going to be very tight. "There will be things revealed in ***Captain Atom***, that will be important to the League, that won't be mentioned in the League's book, and vice versa. Readers should really read that book too." Well, there's another preview to look up when you're done here.

From this year's ***Justice League International Annual****. Bill Willingham's interpretation of The Joker.*

Big Barda, the buxom bombshell that wedded Mister Miracle, will play a much more regular role in the book, and Aquaman will be popping up in the series as time goes by, as will G'Nort, the Green Lantern introduced in ***Millennium***.

The Creeper will probably also be seen again, in preparation for his new series. "I'd like to kind of split the team into two for a while," says Giffen, "so that I could get the really powerful guys off in one story, and the more down-to-Earth guys like Blue Beetle and Booster Gold. I don't want this book to become 'cosmic epic of the month.' Just because there's seven or eight members of the team, that doesn't mean I have to show them all every issue."

The League will actually get their own country in an upcoming issue, a small piece of land which will be named J.L.I. "This is our Latveria. If Dr. Doom can have a country, so can the Justice League!"

"The flavor of the book is going to remain the same," says Giffen. Gee, it always tasted like newsprint to me. "No, I mean that wink-wink-nudge-nudge knowwhatImean-fanboy type of humor. The stories will have an element of seriousness to them, so that the reader who likes his super-heroes straight can see that there is a threat and that they are going after it, but there's that little bit of levity in the book as well. We plot this book by a kind of seat-of-the-pants plotting, and I think that's what has kept the book as fresh as I think it is. At least I hope it is."

Justice league International fans are also advised to check out the entry for ***The Weird***, as it stars the League, and don't forget that ***Suicide Squad*** preview as well. Oh, and the ***Captain Atom*** preview, too. See you there. —AM—

JUSTICE MACHINE

Written by DOUG MURRAY; illustrated by MIKE GUSTOVICH; edited by DIANA SCHUTZ

32 four-color pages; $1.50; monthly from COMICO

With issue **#14**, due out in February, Doug Murray—known for his work on Marvel's ***The 'Nam***—takes over as the regular scripter for this title. According to Murray, Tony Isabella's final issue is **#11** or **12**, followed by a couple of fill-in issues by guest writers. "I really liked Tony's stuff," Murray told us, "and will be following up on much of it with my stories."

First of all, the last time we saw Demon, he had apparently drowned while swimming back to New York. "One of the first instructions I was given by Comico was to bring him back," Murray said, so with **#14** Demon will apparently return, with the full explanation occurring in issue **#17**. Murray went on to state that a Demon mini-series is in the works for sometime next year, but it hadn't been scheduled at this writing.

Next, Blazer will have an operation that will implant the controls for her costume inside her body. "What this will mean is that for the first time since puberty, she will be able actually to touch the outside world without the suit on." Voncroft, a scientist from New Atlantist discovered a way to implant the control disks and thus performs the operation. This will drastically affect how Blazer reacts to the world, and she will become involved in a relationship with fellow teammate Youthquake.

During issues **#14-18**, Murray will be enlarging and explaining about New Atlantis—how it came to be, and more background on the city. Also, Georwell will attack the Earth. It seems that they have discovered a way to track Maynor (the rebel leader) via his use of the teleportation device that he utilizes to pop between Georwell and Earth. Since the Georwellian government is afraid of both him and the Justice Machine, they have decided to destroy both, along with the Earth.

At this time, the Machine will split into three teams, one which will return to Georwell to attack the troops on their home grounds, the second which will assist in protecting Earth, and the third team—consisting of Challenger and Diviner—who will attempt to recover their sons from the clutches of the Georwellian army. Murray felt that these two characters really didn't hate each other, and should be reunited. He felt that since Challenger couldn't really know what happened to his sons, Diviner wouldn't be able to hold it against him, and so he arranged to reunite the husband and wife.

In the future, we can expect to see both more action and deeper characterization in the characters of this book.

Murray felt that things weren't moving along fast enough, nor was there enough internalization to suit him, so he is going to be working on these aspects of the book. "This is not to say that I didn't like what Tony was doing, I did enjoy the book under him, but now I'm writing it, and picking up on different things." As stated at the onset, Murray will be following the major portions of situations set up by Isabella. "I'm going to be working on lots of background, characterization, and advancing the storyline. I also have a couple of stories dealing with the backgrounds of Titan and Challenger." Murray was very excited about working on the series, and his sole lament was that since he was working so far in advance of the actual on-sale date (about nine months) he was unsure of as to how the fans were going to react to the stuff he was currently writing. Still, he was having a good time with the characters. —RJS—

Justice Machine. A new writer.

KATY KEENE

Written by VARIOUS; penciled by JOHN LUCAS; inked by CHIC STONE; edited by VICTOR GORELICK

32 four-color pages; newsstand distribution; 75 cents; published bi-monthly by ARCHIE COMIC PUBLICATIONS, INC.

Throughout her four color, four-decade career, Katy Keene has displayed an up-to-the minute wardrobe, never being seen twice in the same outfit. This will continue into 1988 and (no doubt) beyond—aided, as always, by suggestions from her readers. The active solicitation of (and giving credit for) these suggestions is one the most enduring and endearing traits of this venerable series.

During 1988, Katy will continue to pursue her glamorous acting and modeling career, juggle boyfriends, and dodge Gloria's nefarious schemes. Sis, who suddenly grew up a couple of years ago, doesn't have any more growth spurts planned.

Aside from the regular bi-monthly series, Katy is now scheduled to appear in the annual ***Katy Keene Digest***. This reprint volume will showcase the work of series creator Bill Woggon, whose artwork glitters so brightly you can almost read it in the dark. It's a shame to see it relegated to such a tiny format, but current artists Lucas and Stone are doing as good a job of carrying on as can be expected of mere mortals. —DM—

KEIF LLAMA, XENO-TECH

Written and illustrated by MATT HOWARTH; edited by GARY GLOTH

32 black-and-white pages; $2.00; monthly from FANTAGRAPHICS BOOKS

Keif will be graduating from Howarth's ***Particle Dreams*** to her own title, due to commence in May. Issue **#1** is titled "Ambitious," and finds Keif in the unusual position of being granted a four-day weekend. Naturally, she wants to head for the nearest beach and frolic in the warm colored sands. Of course, there's a snowball's chance in hell that this will happen. On her way to a spaceport to leave for said beach, Keif encounters a slimy corporate type. Said corporate type offers her far too much money to ignore if she'll take on a three-day off-world assignment. The job takes her to a world where the corporate types want to confiscate the local natives' sperm. Things get rather complicated from there, and Keif meets an old high school heartthrob along the way.

Issue **#2** is told entirely in retrospect, and is called "Eyewitness and Document." Keif recounts to a board of inquiry her recent misadventures as a cosmic babysitter. It seems that she consented to take care of six alien kids, all of whom wanted to go "picnic at the falls." While there, they are attacked by

Layout to the cover for ***Keif Llama: Xeno-Tech #2*** *by Matt Howarth.*

KAPTAIN KEEN AND COMPANY

Written and illustrated by BILL WHITE and GARY FIELDS

24 black-and-white pages; $1.75; bi-monthly from VORTEX COMICS

Kaptain Keen will continue to toss adult-level satire from behind the seemingly innocuous facade. The big news here is that KK has been optioned for a possible Saturday morning animated program. Should this actually happen, there is a possibility that the book might change somewhat, in order to be consistent with the TV show. —SW—

a large robot-type thing that seems to be interested in one brat in particular. Keif, in fact, is up on charges for saving the kid! In this issue, Howarth also promises that we finally get to see Lance, Keif's boyfriend.

"A Thorn Under the Rose" is the title of #3. Keif receives the dubious honor of being security for an intergalactic flower show. Well, it doesn't take long for things to get fishy, as Keif gets caught up in strange criminal activities and all sorts of mayhem.

Issue #4 is titled "Murder on the O'Brien Express." In it, Keif is punished for all of her bumbling, and sent way out on the rim, which she sees as a reward, after all, this is where she's always wanted to be: out amongst the border worlds. The O'Brien Express is the name of an off-world shuttle that Keif is traveling on. While there she befriends a guy in the engine room. They end up being trapped in a compartment for a time, and emerge to find that the entire crew has all died simultaneously. What is behind it all? I know, but I'm not tellin'! —JW—

KEITH LAUMER'S RETIEF

Adapted by JAN STRNAD; illustrated by DENNIS FUJITAKE

32 black-and-white pages; $2.00; bi-monthly from MAD DOG GRAPHICS

First up is an adaptation of "Ultimatum." The CDT receives a demand from a warlike race they thought had disappeared two centuries before. It says they must vacate a planet's population, which —brave souls that they are—they prepare to do immediately. It's up to the two-fisted diplomat Jame Retief to best the aggressive Qornt, find out their secret and convince them to join the Terran way. All in a day's work.

Issue #6's "The Forest in the Sky" finds the CDT anxious to open negotiations with a planet to which their rivals the Groaci have laid claim. It seems the population lives in huge trees, unable to descend because of the voracious groundlings, and the invaders have declared the planet uninhabited, since no one lives *on* it. Retief copes with greedy Groaci, a hungry populace and malfunctioning one-man balloons with remarkable aplomb.

The initial six-issue test run of ***Keith Laumer's Retief*** has been successful enough to urge Strnad and Laumer into an open-ended agreement to continue the book. "I hope to do all of the existing Retief material," says Strnad, "Then we'll see what happens."

He will, unfortunately, have to go on without Fujitake, who is bowing out to concentrate on another—so far secret—project. As to another artist for ***Retief***, "I have someone trying out for it, but it's on an experimental basis right now," says Strnad. —SV—

KILGORE

As told to BRIAN CHIN and STEVE JARVIS by COL. KILGORE

24 black-and-white pages; $2.00; bi-monthly from RENEGADE

No doubt you know that these are the true adventures of Col. Kilgore and have been chronicled by creative team Brain Chin and Steve Jarvis. Col. Kilgore wanted his biography written up for posterity, but felt that it should be accompanied by illustrations so that the reader will really feel that he was there with the Colonel in the heat of battle. There are six issues in all, and by the

Kilgore.

time *AHPS* comes out, ***Kilgore #1*** should be on the stands. Issue #2 comes out in January and features Kilgore in sunny southern California, trying to get into the movies. In between screen tests, he fights a Japanese battleship!

In #3, Kilgore follows an attractive Russian agent out to the desert where they search for aliens that were reported to be out there. As usual, Kilgore has a scheme—when he finds the aliens, he'll put 'em on the Ed Sullivan Show. When they find 'em, it doesn't quite turn out the way he expected.

Kilgore's version of "Lady From Shanghai" will appear in #4, in which he takes in all the various sleazy tourist attractions during a chase for some diamonds with a couple of Hawaii Five-O-type characters running around in Hawaiian shirts.

In July, #5 is what I call the "Oliver North Meets Godzilla" issue. Kilgore meets a beautiful French revolutionary and some dinosaurs, as well as attempting one of the most terrifying, death-defying feats known to man—facing a Senate Congressional Committee!

Well, I might as well finish up with #6, due out in September 1988. There's a Kilgore guest appearance on the "Ben Casey" television show. What more could you ask for? —CG—

KINGS IN DISGUISE

Written by JAMES VANCE; illustrated by DAN BURR; edited by DAVE SCHREINER

6-issue limited series; 32 black-and-white pages; $2.00; bi-monthly from KITCHEN SINK PRESS

Kings in Disguise is something different, even for Kitchen Sink: a Depression-era story centered on the coming of age of Freddie, a 12-year-old boy who leaves a broken home, searching for his father who left several years earlier. He lives through a series of adventures on the road, including traveling with a bunch of hobos, hopping freight trains and

Dan Burr's pencils for the Kings in Disguise adaptation.

becoming involved with the nascent labor movement. In the course of his adventures, he travels from California to Detroit, then back again.

"There are no capes, no superheroes," says publisher Denis Kitchen. "It's a pretty down-to-earth story, which we think is very well told. Our feeling is that it's going to have a good cult audience in the comic market. We're looking for an older and intelligent reader."

The mini-series debuts in March, behind a Steve Rude cover to issue #1.

Both of the series' creators are newcomers to comics. Artist Dan Burr, a long-time commercial illustrator, previously did a story for ***Death Rattle*** and he was the letterer for Kitchen Sink's late ***Alien Fire***. Writer James Vance is a teacher at Tulsa Junior College in Oklahoma and an award-winning playwright. In fact, the first two issues of ***Kings in Disguise*** originally were written as a play and were adapted for the comic book format. —RE—

KIT E. KAT

Written and penciled by JEFF WOOD; inked by ROBERT GUTHRIE; edited by JIM MAIN

32 black-and-white pages; $1.75; frequency undetermined by CAT'S PAW COMICS

Joining the ranks of comic book anthropomorphic characters is Kit E. Kat, described by editor/publisher Jim Main as "an agent for hire or mercenary." Kit has no allegiance to any country and chooses her assignments depending upon what mood she is in. Her mastery of fighting arts, knowledge of weaponry and technology, and sheer ruthlessness make her an ideal choice for the missions that are requested by the various powers which wish to hire her. *Kit E. Kat* is an off-beat blend of adventure, politics, espionage, and humor. Issue #1 is scheduled for an April 1988 release. —NK—

THE LAST AMERICAN

Written by JOHN WAGNER and ALAN GRANT; illustrated by MIKE McMAHON; edited by ARCHIE GOODWIN

32 four-color pages; $1.75; bi-monthly from MARVEL EPIC COMICS

The title that the Marvel promotion department had forgotten about in 1986 finally returns to the schedule this year, three years after its inception. The delay was due to Mike McMahon being unable to draw during a long illness.

As originally announced, the Last American is Ulysses Samuel Straker, who is pronounced Holocaust Commander by the president when the bombs are about to fall on the USA. He's also given carte blanche to act as he sees fit in any circumstances in order to re-create a

A character sketch for The Last American.

post-holocaust USA, and placed in suspended animation to sleep through the catastrophe, emerging at an unspecified time in the future.

Wagner and Grant had planned to produce a comic book equivalent of *Mad Max*, but in the three years since they wrote the first issue ***Hex*** has come and gone, and they feel that the idea requires re-working. Although the premise will remain as outlined above any previously announced plot synopses are likely to be redundant, and, as Wagner and Grant have yet to begin their revisions, so is any further comment here. —FP—

THE LAST OF THE VIKING HEROES

Written and illustrated by MICHAEL THIBODEAUX

32 four-color pages; $1.75; bi-monthly from GENESIS WEST

Issues #4-7 is an epic quest series: Tomgar, Eric, and Jon must rescue Prince Sven. Thibodeaux said in an interview in ***Amazing Heroes*** "one of the characters is going to be confronted ...with a dramatic situation ...which I think should be extremely exciting. It's going to be something that will have lifetime consequences."

"It happens out of friendship and it's a pretty heavy thing," Thibodeaux continued, "These issues will delve with commitment, infidelity, and death."

The first two of these issues feature a sort of gathering of Kirby inkers. Where issue #4's parts 1 and 2 featured inking by Thibodeaux and Greg Theakston respectively, #5's parts 3 and 4 highlight inking by Mike Royer and Joe Sinnott, ditto.

Future issues include the return of Tomgar's girlfriend (last seen in issue #2) in #8. We'll find out the reason for Eric's promiscuity in #11—it has to do with "a past relationship." And, answering the question of how an Indian came to be a Viking, the origin of Tomgar will appear in issue #13, as well as showing how he befriended Prince Sven.

LotVH is probably best known (sorry, Michael) for its covers: upcoming artists thereon are Jack Kirby and Dave Stevens on #5, Art Adams on #7, Dave Stevens on #9, and Berni Wrightson on #13. However, as Richard French, Genesis West's publisher said about the covers, "they help people open the book. Once they see inside, I think that's where we got 'em."

"The Phantom Force," the super-team back-up plotted and drawn by Thibodeaux and dialogued by Steve Robertson, will appear in issue #4 and conclude in issue #7. —KD—

LAUGH

Written and drawn by VARIOUS; edited by VICTOR GORELICK

32 four-color pages; newsstand distribution; 75 cents; published bi-monthly by ARCHIE COMIC PUBLICATIONS INC.

The current series of this title is the third to feature the antics of Archie and his buddies, but the first to start with #1—which it did just last year (completists take note). Along with ***Jughead*** and ***Betty and Veronica***, this comic received a new first issue as part of a general modernization of America's Number Three comic book company's line.

With the cancellation of ***Pep***, this is the sole remaining "variety" title in the Archie Series. The Riverdale crew will continue to get cover treatment during 1988. Other strips that will appear here include *Sabrina the Teenage Witch*, and *Josie and the Pussycats*.

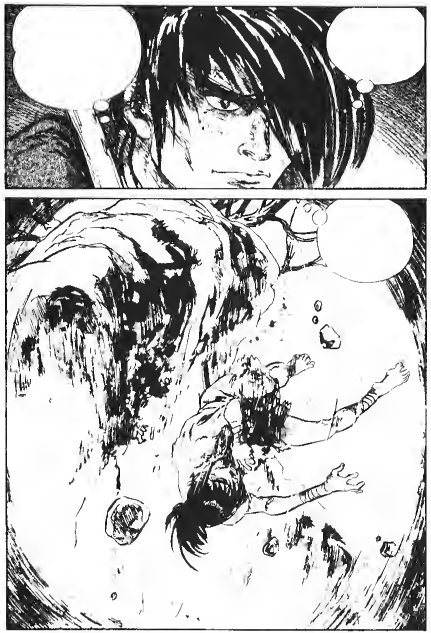
For a list of creators whose work will appear in this title during 1988, see the listing for the company's flagship title, ***Archie***. —DM—

LEAPING WEASEL

Written and illustrated by SCOTT PHILLIPS and JOHN HOWARD

32 black-and-white pages; $1.70; bi-monthly from LEAPING WEASEL PRODUCTIONS (Mature Readers)

Ladeeeeees and gentlemen! In this corner, the pride of Fantagraphics, Jaime and Gilbert Hernandez. And in this corner, the sons of the Leaping Weasel, Scott Phillips and John Howard. This will be the wrestling match of the century! Seriously, the rumors of a match between the ***Love & Rockets*** boys and the ***Leaping Weasel*** fellahs is not settled, but it'll be the biggest thing since Americana met Colonel Ninotchka.



From The Legend of Kamui—words to follow.

The *Leaping Weasel* comic will continue to be the loves of those borderline sleazebags: Scooter and The Sacker.

Stories are somewhat true representations of John and Scott's relationships (payment... uh... reporting ethics prevents me from revealing names). If you like Ms. Olympia type women, *Leaping Weasel* is your book, i.e. Catfish, a big, muscular Indian mystic who lives above Hodad's (a sort of interdimensional bar predating Munden's) and Babe, a big (about 6½", 200+ lbs.), muscular ("biceps as big as my chest," said Scott, "but docile and sweet.") Babe and Scooter love each other but don't know how to make the first move.

In issue #3 the women talk about how Scooter and The Sacker are so frustrated that they are off "Saving Orangutans" in Borneo. In a story called "Aliens Stepped On Our Toes," some jerk makes a pass at a female friend of the boys and they steal and alien ship and zap his car. This issue has the conclusion of "Greenworld Strikers," by John, who recently appeared in *Nerve*.

Scott promises issue #4 will be filled with lots of flesh eating zombies as the women in the strip take a house in the woods. There is also a good chance of a jam strip herein.

The *Leaping Weasel* schedule is a bit off, due to Scott and John working on a low budget horror flick called *Trash queen*, written by them and directed by Scott. Look for #3 early in 88 and #4 to follow some time in May. —KD—

LEGEND LORE

Written by MARTIN KNIGHT and STUART KERR; pencilled by GUY DAVIS; edited by STUART KERR

48 or 64 black-and-white pages; full color cover; price to be determined; direct sales distribution; two-issue mini-series by ARROW COMICS

There are no immediate plans to do more *Realm* related tales in the *Legend Lore* two issue mini-series format. However, Arrow spokesman Ralph Griffith says that if there are any stories to tell that do not fit into the regular *Realm* series, they will show up in *Legend Lore*. —JH—

THE LEGEND OF KAMUI

Written and illustrated by SANPEI SHIRATO; translation by TOREN V. SMITH & SATOKO FUJII; lettering & touch-up art by STAN SAKAI; edited by FRED BURKE

32 to 40 black-and-white pages on white paper; $1.50; direct sales; bi-monthly from ECLIPSE INTERNATIONAL/VIZ COMMUNICATIONS

The Legend of Kamui was Eclipse/Viz's first Japanese translation into English. It is still their most prestigious title, due to its serious nature and to its historically accurate portrait of 17th centrury feudal Japan. *Kamui* is also the most intellectually demanding of their comics, because of its slow pace and because much of the story is not explicitly explained—the reader must infer it from facial expressions and body language, and other subtle clues.

Kamui is a renegade ninja. He has rejected their secret, deadly way of life. He would prefer to live as a commoner or a peasant. However, nobody is allowed to leave the ninja. Kamui finds that he is never able to settle down for more than a brief period before he is unmasked by the *tsuinin*, ninja assigned to track down and kill their apostate brethren. And although Kamui has always managed to escape and flee into hiding once again, his new family and friends are usually slain. Kamui becomes increasingly alienated from all social contact, fearing that he will bring death to everyone with whom he develops a personal relationship.

The second American *Kamui* adventure, "Sword Wind," began in December 1987 and will run into 1989. Kamui himself will not be seen for the first several issues. New characters such as Sakon Ikatsuji, the master swordsman, and Genpo Yagyu of the Yagyu samurai clan are introduced, whose influence on Kamui's life will only gradually be revealed. The main characters of "Sword Wind" will be Kamui, who is trying once again to establish a new life for himself, Utsuse, a young ninja who holds Kamui responsible for the death of his master, Fudo (one of those killed the last time the *tsuinin* caught up with Kamui), and who vows to kill him in revenge, and members of the Yagyu family who have sworn to kill Utsuse for stealing their secret sword-fighting techniques. The story will switch its focus back and forth between Kamui and Utsuse and their companions, bringing them closer to each other, enabling them to develop an understanding and respect for each other while they remain deadly rivals. —FB—

LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES

Written by PAUL LEVITZ; pencilled by GREG LaROCQUE and PAT BRODERICK; inked by MIKE DeCARLO; edited by KAREN BERGER

If you like to draw lots and lots of super-heroes, Legion of Super-Heroes is the book for you. (This is from #45).

32 four-color pages; $1.50; monthly from DC COMICS INC.

It's the Legion of Super-Heroes' 30th anniversary, and they're celebrating it in *LoSH* #45, a testament to the confusion of constantly renumbering series. (It makes it appear as if DC has put out one and a half issues a year.)

Anyway, the anniversary issue follows the by-now usual routine of presenting an "extra thick, extra expensive" issue, with short guest artist bits by such Legion alumni as Curt Swan, Kurt Schaffenberger, Keith Giffen, Dave Cockrum, and Mike Grell. The title of the story is "Unlucky Streak," and it deals with Lightning Lad, arguably the unluckiest of the Legionnaires.

Issues #46-49 of the Legion will feature the "Conspiracy Theory" sequence. Parallel plots include the return of Starfinger, and the development of a conspiracy inside the Legion. Pat Broderick helps out Legion regular Greg LaRocque by co-pencilling #46 and 47, and doing #49 all by himself. Following author Paul Levitz's fondness for "continued" titles, #48 goes by the title "A Time to Die," while #49 is named "A Time to Live." Issue #50, which is *not* named "Turn, Turn, Turn," and this year's *Legion of Super-Heroes Annual*, will wrap up the saga.

Tales of the Legion has been cancelled, so if you were holding off waiting for the inexpensive reprints DC was going to bring you, it's time to hustle back to the comics shop and pick up a year's worth of *Legion of Super-Heroes* (probably two bucks or more apiece). —GJ—

LIBBY ELLIS

Written by DENNIS PIMPLE; pencilled by NORM DWYER; inked by NORM DWYER; edited by DENNIS PIMPLE

32 black-and-white pages; $1.95; monthly from ETERNITY COMICS

"*Libby Ellis* is continuing as planned, four issues each summer, featuring complete stories that are linked thematically," said series writer Dennis Pimple.

Libby Ellis returns for another mini-series.

The issues beginning in July 1988 will feature 20-page front stories by Norm Dwyer, and two-part 12 page backup stories by new cartoonists. "All 32 pages will be story this time," said Pimple. "No puffy text pieces or house ads to fill space. In a perfect world, this is how all comics would be (heh heh)."

Another new feature of the series is the addition of David "Himself" Wilson as Technical Consultant on Biker Affairs. "He keeps me straight on the things bikers would and wouldn't do and say," said Pimple. "He's a real help, and he works cheap."

The merging of Malibu with Eternity didn't affect *Libby Ellis*. "My main concern was creative control, but with Tom Mason running the creative end for Eternity, I have no doubt that—for good or ill—*Libby Ellis* with be my and Norm's comic."

LIBERATOR

Written by PAUL RYAN O'CONNOR; pencilled by JIM CHADWICK; inked by BUTCH BURCHAM

32 black-and-white pages; $1.95; monthly from ETERNITY COMICS

In *Liberator* #1, Rocky Stevens learns of his terminal cancer and that someone wearing his old costume has invaded Nicaragua. Rocky is America's second Liberator who was forced to resign by government request due to the unpopularity of super-heroes and a shifting of

Eternity's Liberator asks some very important questions

the country to a less openly militaristic stance.

Unbeknownst to him, in the years since Rocky's resignation, the government, with a trail that eventually leads to the White House, has secretly re-launched the Liberator program under a new name—Project: Shangri-La—and with a new super-hero—The Peacekeeper.

It's The Peacekeeper that Rocky, and others, have seen in Nicaragua. Why the government has reactivated the program after making such a public spectacle of Rocky's resignation, what is the true cause of Rocky's cancer, and how any of this involves Rocky's friend, John Turner, America's first Liberator, are just a few of the questions Rocky Stevens must answer.

And he'll kill anyone who stands in his way. Even himself.

THE LIBERTY PROJECT

Written by KURT BUSIEK, pencilled by JAMES W. FRY, inked by DOUG HAZLEWOOD, edited by FRED BURKE

32 full-color pages, $1.75 cents, monthly from ECLIPSE

In issue #8, drastic changes will occur within the team. One of the members will die (!!!) and the rest will find themselves in a position they thought they had left behind forever. How is *that* for being cryptic? Editor Fred Burke promises that the issue contains James W. Fry's most dynamic pencils yet.

—JW—

LIFE WITH ARCHIE

Written and drawn by VARIOUS, edited by VICTOR GORELICK

32 four-color pages, 75 cents, newsstand distribution: bi-monthly from ARCHIE PUBLICATIONS, INC.

This title, which started out with a "day in the life" format and went on to introduce "Pureheart the Powerful" and "The Man from R I V E R D A L E," is now pretty indistinguishable from the general run of the line. Plans for 1988 include more of the same clean, wholesome comics for younger readers that have appeared here all along.

Check the listing for ***Archie*** for a list of creators whose talents will limn these pages.

—DM—

Frank Miller's cover to ***Lone Wolf and Cub #9***

LONE WOLF AND CUB

Written by KAZUO KOIKE, illustrated by GOSEKI KOJIMA, covers and introductions by FRANK MILLER

64 black-and-white pages (some issues 72 pages), $2.50, monthly from FIRST COMICS

The legendary samurai book, the source of the "Samurai Assassin" movies, continues as relentlessly as Itto Ogami's and Diagoro's own march across feudal Japan. ***Lone Wolf and Cub*** was originally serialized in Japan's weekly *Manga Action* (Action Comics) between 1970 and 1976. The stories were then collected into a set of 28 paperback volumes. At the rate of one story per monthly issue, it will take First Comics around 20 years to finish the series.

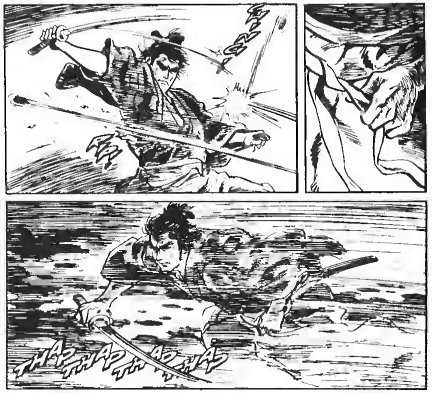
The story concept announced in ***AHPS #5*** is still the same: "In 1655 the Shogun is served by the Ogami clan as official ceremonial executioners, and by the Yagyu clan as secret political assassins. The Yagyus covet both positions. Through murder and deceit, the Yagyus destroy the Ogamis until the only remaining members are Itto Ogami, master swordsman, and his infant son Diagoro. Itto Ogami is so determined to avenge his clan's honor that he 'enters hell' by defying the Shogun's order to commit ritual suicide. Ogami becomes a wandering assassin-for-hire, taking Diagoro with him in a baby carriage chock-full of hidden weapons. In addition to the normal dangers of Ogami's contracted murders of highly skilled opponents, he must constantly guard against the Yagyu assassins who seek to eliminate him before he can win his vengeance against them."

"Upcoming stories? Itto Ogami continues to slice and dice his way across feudal Japan. Who could ask for more?", says First Comics's Rick Oliver. First Comics is not printing the stories in the order in which they appear in the Japanese 28-volume set, so there's no telling which stories to expect next. Indeed, now that the origin story has been published, the stories are pretty much interchangeable. It was only towards the end of the series, when the fact that the infant Diagoro never grew older began to make the Japanese public impatient, that the plot undertook a significant evolution.

Most of Rick Oliver's news concerns technical matters. "Beginning with issue #8, the cover price will be $2.50, with the page count remaining at 64 pages per issue—with the exception of issue #9 (shipping in January), which will run 72 pages for the same price. Although not yet decided, we are debating increasing the page count to 128 pages per issue with issue #13, with a price under $4.00. Frank Miller will continue to do the covers and introductions at least through issue #12. Coloring credit on covers goes to Lynn Varley."

—FPs—

Archie of the Jungle, from ***Life With Archie #265***



Lone Wolf and Cub by Koike and Kojima

THE LOST PLANET

Written and illustrated by BO HAMPTON and VARIOUS OTHER HAMPTONS, edited by LETITIA GLOZER

6-issue limited series, 32 full-color pages, $2.00, bi-monthly from ECLIPSE COMICS

If you speak to those good people at the Eclipse offices about this title, you will no doubt hear that it is "a wonderful series" by (predominantly) "one of the most talented people in the business" (Bo Hampton). Additionally, you will be told that Eclipse is generally "very happy doing it." (Thanks to Sean for the above quotes as Letitia had just gone on vacation).

Perhaps a trifle more seriously, I should mention that ***Lost Planet*** did indeed hold its own in the comic book market place while the slump in independent sales lasted in '87. Furthermore, the title has been well received by fans and critics which, I suppose is any comic book's icing on the cake.

Lost Planet features a hero "who doesn't go around ready to hit people at the drop of a hat" (thanks again be to Sean for the quote) and his name is Tyler Flynn. Mr. Flynn, you may recall, is an adventurer who inadvertently made the trip from Earth to the Lost Planet. His supporting cast includes Romney, his romantic interest, Max, his favorite chimp, and Zorin, one very evil lord. Then, there is the Lost Planet itself, a nuclear ravaged place inhabited by tribes of mutated people and subject to mysticism and magic. Another group that would be very peeved if I didn't mention them are the Scientists, as it was they who caused the aforesaid nuclear horror.

The ***LP*** cast is completed by various characters from Earth who also made the trip as Flynn had done. On view are Amelia Earhart, Judge Crater and Ambrose Bierce. Amelia was originally taken hostage by Zorin but then forced to become his "queen." Crater is a fairly corrupt political and legal figure from the 1930s, who also falls into Zorin's clutches, and Bierce killed Zorin's father (and so is in *big* trouble). At the end of issue #4, Romney was taken prisoner in the evil Lord's castle, necessitating a rescue attempt by Mr. Flynn and aides. It should be noted that Romney has an emerald in her possession and that it is of vital importance to the entire storyline of the ***Lost Planet***. Not surprisingly, it comes from the Emerald Cave. However, she has the last one. To understand the full significance of this, you will have to read issues #5 and 6. Don't make me tell you myself otherwise Mr. Bo might rearrange my body structure.

So, #s 5 & 6 find Romny being tortured to death (apparently). Flynn and Pearce are attacked by local natives at the Emerald Cave and taken prisoner. Then, they encounter Amelia and Crater. The final issue (#6) is described by Bo as "the big wrap-up" and, he adds, "everyone winds up at Zorin's castle."

The back-ups in ***LP*** provide important data on the characters and various aspects of the leading story. For example, one back-up reveals that Romny also came from Earth. Further, I am pleased to tell you that ***LP #4*** was a history making issue as it featured contributions from five members of the Hampton family! Bo wrote and drew the lead story which was lettered by sister Tracey. The back-up was written by Bunny Hampton-Mack, illustrated by Scott Hampton and lettered by Todd Hampton.

The final points of interest I'd like to leave you with are that Max, the chimp, is based upon an elder of an African tribe(?) of chimps named Leaky. Bo has a book produced by a scientist of the same name who studied chimps in Africa. He draws Max directly from Leaky's image. Also, Romny is a combination of Bo's girlfriend, who he says is beautiful, and his own totally idealized female. I urge all of you to demand that Eclipse include a photo of his girlfriend in issue #6 as she seems too good to stay anonymous!

P.S. Bo wants me to inform you that #6 has a back-up feature that was originally produced for Marvel's now defunct ***Epic*** magazine. He's really thrilled to be able to present it now, three years after it was executed, as he believes it's one of his better efforts. What type of feature is it? Why, sci-fi, of course!

—PC—

LOVE & ROCKETS

Written and illustrated by GILBERT JAIME and MARIO HERNANDEZ, edited by GARY GROTH

32 black-and-white pages, $2.25, bi-monthly from FANTAGRAPHICS BOOKS (Mature Readers)

Done especially for the **AHPS**

See *no* major characters die! See Izzy Ruebens go to Mexico and have her life changed! See Luba lose something precious to her forever! See Hopey and Tex on the road together, struggling to survive! See Errata Stigmata try to lead a normal life! All this and more in the sixth thrilling year of ***Love and Rockets***!

Issue #25 begins, at long last, the story of *what happened to Izzy in Mexico*. It's a flashback, and contains flashbacks within flashbacks as far back as Maggie as a baby. Jaime provides tantalizing elucidations. "At the beginning of the story Izzy explains, 'I had just gotten off a divorce, my father and I were fighting constantly and my writing became nothing. I had no inspiration to write, I had nothing to write about.' Her life is becoming the same way, without inspiration. So she had no choice but to go to Mexico." It's while visiting some distant relatives south of the border that Izzy experiences... a change.

"This story is going to go on forever," Jaime predicts. "There's going to be issues where people are going to think, 'Oh my god, he's doing it again' [a reference to what some perceived as meandering in "Locas" a few issues back] but when it's all brought together it's gonna make sense. This one I actually know what I'm doing."

Is it one specific experience or a series of experiences that makes Izzy what we see today? "It's a total experience. She didn't exactly become a slob because it was so horrible, a lot of it was wonderful. As for why she let her appearance go, she found other things more important. She's there for a long time."

Meanwhile, back in the present, following the developments in Maggie's relationship with Race in #24, her life (like her weight) will be stabilizing somewhat. Hopey will not be so lucky, however. Indeed, Jaime hints that it could be quite some time before (if) Maggie and Hopey are reunited. After Hopey's band's doomed tour ends with band members ready to kill each other, Hopey is stranded on the East Coast "with some new guy. They end with no place to go and they're traveling partners." Hopey's new friend is Tex, and we'll follow their adventures as they drift west.

At the same time, Maggie is trying to "find ways to make money so she can go to look for Hopey, while Hopey is just trying to survive, period." Upcoming is a story entitled "Polar Bears" which explores the relationship between Maggie and her wrestler aunt, Vicki Glori, as Vicki takes Maggie on the road as her assistant. We may also see a Mechanics story—but starring Race, Duke, and Yax.

As for Gilberto, the first half of '88 features the big wind up to "Human Diastrophism;" the six-part magnum opus which changes life in Palomar *forever*. Issue #25 features all sorts of dramatic developments in the lives of the characters, but Beto cautions, "I don't like to make this soapy, I'm going to try to wrap this thing up."

As previously reported, after the end of "Human Diastrophism" in #26, we leave Palomar for a while—perhaps as much as a year, real time. When we return, many years will have passed in the strip. "[It] will be a whole new ballgame, new characters, some old ones will return but a lot of them will be new. Yes, more new characters. I'm just trying to get away from the soap opera type thing of everybody knows each other, everybody's lives are entertwined. A lot of these characters will have nothing to do with Luba and Chelo. Luba, Chelo and the kids will be in the stories but they won't associate too much with the characters."

In the meantime, we'll just see shorter, more experimental stories, starting off with a tale of Errata Stigmata which picks up where "Tears from Heaven" left off, showing Errata in school. Recalling the often horrifying images of his first tale, Gilbert says this story isn't "going to be too gruesome. I'm going to lay off the brutality. But [it] will return in the next issue," with a tale called "Poison River" which features Luba when she was younger.

Although in very tentative stages right now, later in the year Gilbert may release a book of shorter non-***Love & Rockets*** stories. —HMarD—

LUCIFER

Written by EDDIE CAMPBELL, illustrated by PHIL ELLIOTT

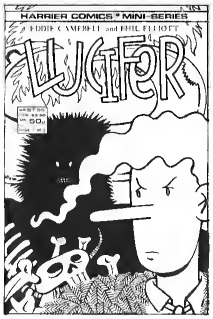
3 issue mini-series, 28 black-and-white pages, $1.95, bi-monthly from HARRIER COMICS/NEW WAVE

Last seen in ***Honk!***'s "The Mammy," Lucifer is "a lunatic who thinks he's the fallen angel of biblical infamy," according to Campbell. The three issues are a humorous trilogy loosely based on famous works of literature as Lucifer recounts his story from a padded cell.

In the first issue Lucifer is in the hospital when he encounters a man with a monstrous carbuncle on his nose that he claims contains the kingdom of Hell. Lucifer hijacks the carbuncle and he enters a Hell based on an updated version of Dante's inferno, where there are five levels of Hell, each populated by present day undesirables such as people who won't buy their round in the pub. By the end of that issue Lucifer is master of Hell, setting himself up for the second issue's update of *Paradise Lost*, where Adam and Eve are replaced by Madonna and Sean Penn.

Lucifer eventually returns to Earth for a parody of St. John's Apocalypse, accompanied, naturally enough, by the four bicyclists of the apocalypse.

The first issue is drawn by Phil Elliott, and it's hoped that Paul Grist will complete the series, but whatever happens Campbell promises a strip "rich in satirical overtones and innuendo" and that everything included is parodying something. —FPI—



Not Jughead wearing a wig, but Lucifer.

LUM: URUSEI YATSURA

Written and illustrated by RUMIKO TAKAHASHI; translator, letterer & touch-up artist, editor not yet determined

46 black-and-white or one-color, $2.00, monthly from ECLIPSE INTERNATIONAL/VIZ COMMUNICATIONS.

Ever since Eclipse and Viz first announced their program to present the best Japanese comic books in accurate American editions, they have been deluged with requests from the American fans of Japanimation for a translation of ***Urusei Yatsura***. This comic book, created by 22-year-old Rumiko Takahashi in 1979, has just been concluded after a run that has filled 34 reprint volumes (over 6,000 pages). It has inspired a TV cartoon series that ran for five years (218 episodes), plus four theatrical features with a fifth in production. ***Urusei Yatsura*** alone has made Takahashi a millionaire (she is writing/drawing other comics as well).

Despite this, Viz has had serious reservations about attempting an American edition. Unlike their other titles such as ***Area 88*** and ***Maiu, the Psychic Girl*** which are straightforward adventure serials, ***Urusei Yatsura*** is a teen-age fantasy-comedy that is filled with puns, current Japanese schoolyard slang, offhand allusions to Japanese historical incidents and customs, and a general Shinto/Buddhist (rather than Judeo-Christian) cultural background. This makes ***Urusei Yatsura*** extremely difficult to translate without cramming in lengthy story-stopping footnotes.

The title itself is a good example. Most American fans have been calling this *Those Obnoxious Aliens*. *Urusei Yatsura* can be translated fairly literally as *Those Guys from the Planet Uru*. But this misses the pun that *Uru sei* = the planet Uru, but *urusei* = troublemakers or pests, and "urusai yatsu" (sic) is slang for nerds. This latter is an allusion to the entire cast, not just the aliens. Viz's tentative solution is to call the American edition ***Lum*** after the heroine, and to add the original "urusei yatsu" in Takahashi's attractive calligraphic design as a subtitle. But this leaves the multiple meanings unexplained. Nevertheless, the demand from American fans has grown so great that Viz will make the attempt to create a translation which reads smoothly and accurately presents Takahashi's humorous plots.

When powerful aliens from Uru come to Earth, their landing site is Tomobiki City, a fictional suburb of Tokyo. It's their custom to challange each world they visit to a contest. If they win (and they haven't lost yet), the planet is supposed to surrender without a fuss, while if the local planet wins, they will accept the natives as equals. Their computer picks Ataru Moroboshi, the inept would-be class stud at Tomobiki High School (he hasn't been able to score yet) to be

From **Lum: Urusei Yatsura**. *The title of this story is "The Buried Classroom," which was expanded into a combined parody of "The Texas Chainsaw Massacre" and "Attack of the Killer Tomatoes" in the TV cartoon adaptation.*

Earth's champion; and their own commander's daughter, sixteen-year-old Lum (about as cute as you can get with hair, horns, and fangs) as their representative. Ataru wins by a ruse which will outrage feminists everywhere, but Lum-chan is so smitten that she decides that she wants to stay on Earth as an exchange student—living as a household guest at the Moroboshi home. Although the aliens are now friends, they are powerful enough that nobody wants to antagonize them (and Earth's governments want the benefits of their technology), so the Moroboshis can hardly decline. With Lum comes her infant cousin, Janten (a.k.a. Ten-chan), who breathes fire and takes an instant dislike to Ataru. As if Ataru didn't have enough trouble impressing the local girls, he now has a self proclaimed "fiancee" who follows him everywhere, and who can give off powerful electric shocks whenever she gets excited—like, every time she catches Ataru being "unfaithful" to her.

This is the set-up for the first few stories alone. Takahashi kept up the interest in *Urusei Yatsura* for eight years by constantly adding members to a large supporting cast of both humans and extraterrestrials. The result was a rich fantasy-comedy soap-opera as Lum-chan and her teen alien friends mixed together with the students of Tomobiki High School. Some of the supporting characters, such as Shutaro Mendo (a cross between Richie Rich and Reggie in *Archie*, he hires a private army of mercenaries in an attempt to keep Ataru from making passes at his sister, Ryoko, who has a talent for fiendish practical jokes ...), became more popular with some readers than the stars. Many of the space aliens are thinly disguised, Japanese mythological characters, parodies of popular s-f movie monsters, and the like. There are also parodies of popular Japanese entertainers and movies have not been seen in America, and Viz hasn't decided yet how to handle translating these sequences. *Lum: Urusei Yatsuara* promises to be a unique and interesting comic book for readers and production staff alike.

—PPs—

LUNATIC FRINGE

Written by SCOTT ROCKWELL and DAVID LAWRENCE; pencilled by JOHN R. STATEMA; inked by BILL ANDERSON; edited by DAVID CAMPITI

32 four-color pages, $1.95, monthly from PIED PIPER PRESS

As the new, streamlined Pied Piper Press gets back down to the business of putting out comics, ***The Lunatic Fringe*** finds itself in a curious state of limbo.

While things get sorted out, let's refresh our memories a bit.

"This is a group that lives at a slight angle to the real world," explains series creator Scott Rockwell. "Finding out they have super powers, and are hidden by a secret organization to fight crime and/or evil doesn't help much. But, hey! The money's good."

The first issue will let us "Meet the Lunatic Fringe," and we will be introduced to a host of bizarre characters. Rodent, Bird, Paloma, Steak, Buckaroo and Elwood are only some of the people who pop up in this origin issue.

"Monsters from the ID—or, How Ya Gonna Keep 'Em Down on the Farm Once They've Destroyed Tokyo?" is the title of the second issue. The Fringe is in Japan (surprise!) where they witness thousands of workers building a full-scale replica of Tokyo to fool the monsters! (The secret is out, folks! Those movie beasties are for real!)

Upcoming, a search for other truths (championship wrestling? real as oxygen!) Also, "The Search for Elwood's Brain!"

—SW—

M.I.C.R.A.

Written by LAMAR WALDRON; illustrated by TED SOONTHANAKIR; edited by DWIGHT JON ZIMMERMAN

12-issue limited series; 32 black-and-white pages; $1.50; quarterly from COMICS INTERVIEW PUBLICATIONS

Issue #6 is titled "A New Beginning" and is a flashback/recap of the first five issues, culminating in M.I.C.R.A./Angela's battle with her sister Rita, who was the head of a terrorist organization. Now, with the death of Rita, M.I.C.R.A. will be secretly assisting the Vice-President and the Council. Assisting her in this endeavor are Dr. Lucane, Eric, and Colonel Barr. Meanwhile, she is still pretending to help the army, unaware that the Army is likewise stringing her along so that they can discover the secrets to her body and then build an army of M.I.C.R.A.s.

During this issue, Army Intelligence learns about Angela's past (being born outside the dome, and her relationship to Rita) and alerts General Wyler. The General then plots to get Angela out of the M.I.C.R.A. program, and tells her that they could perform an operation on her that will cure her and free her from the M.I.C.R.A. Angela fairly jumps at the chance to become fully functional again, and opts for the operation. All of which leads directly into issue #7 and the death of a major character. This issue also winds out with a major cliff-hanger where not only are Dr. Lucane, Eric, and Colonel Barr all in mortal jeopardy, but in the second biggest jam of the series. ("The biggest jam occurs in issue #11.")

Issue #8 will be much darker in tone, and someone will continue to be M.I.C.R.A.s. (writer Lamar Waldron wouldn't reveal exactly who), and personal relationships continue to develop as more issues arise. An undercurrent of suspicion will run throughout the rest of the book, as people are unsure of who can be trusted. "The intensity of the energy in the book will increase at this point," Waldron related.

—RJS—

The cover to the upcoming M.I.C.R.A. #7

MADBALLS

Written by MICHAEL GALLAGHER; pencilled by HOWARD POST; inked by ROBERTA EDELMAN; edited by SID JACOBSON

32 four-color pages, $1.00; newsstand distribution; bi-monthly from MARVEL COMICS GROUP

Every villain the Madballs ever faced shows up as they join forces to destroy the Madballs in "The Return of Every one." In a send-up of *Fantastic Voyage*, the Madballs become "The Fantastic Voyeurs," and are reduced to microscopic size, entering Dr. Frankenbean's body to save his life.

MADE IN AMERICA

Written by MARK L. HAMLIN and ROGER McKENZIE; breakdowns by SCOTT ROSEMA; pencils by JACK SNIDER; inked(?)-to be identified; edited by ROGER McKENZIE

32 black-and-white pages; $1.95; bi-monthly from PIED PIPER PRESS

This new series, created by Mark Hamlin and Roger McKenzie, is a "fictional real-life type action drama." It will feature realistic characters that will hopefully turn out to be somewhere in between prime-time TV and soap opera intensity.

The only available info on the book at present is that it will appear in the first half of 1988, and feature lots of hard-hitting action and American adventure.

—SW—

MAELSTROM

Written and illustrated by JIM SOMERVILLE; edited by MIKE CHARBONNEAU

24 black-and-white pages; $1.50; monthly from ARCEL PUBLISHING

Following the end of Bad-azz Brash and the Metalords' reign of terror, Maelstrom turns his back on civilization and life, looking inward to himself. As he travels through small towns and cities looking for more hallucinogenic booze, he keeps pretty much to himself. When not in town to pick up booze, he is wandering the wastelands and mountain forests. All the while, he drinks to forget his experience with the Dark One's vengeance which eats away his mind.

Then a mysterious stranger/spectre enters Maelstrom's life, piercing his drug-induced shell and forcing him back into the real world to face the challenges and bizarre violences that fill his world.

Bearing in mind that Mael is not all the strong, intelligent barbarian that Conan is, you can be sure that he will continue to find himself in situations where brute strength and ignorance are not enough. (On the other hand, Mael might not be particularly bright, but neither is he overwhelmingly stupid.)

Upcoming events in this book include: Mael's our favorite executioner, being captured and accused of murder; the introduction of the above mentioned spectre who may prove to be either friend or foe; and the secret of Rak Kur-Rok's affliction.

As always, action will be the byword with *Maelstrom*—and, of course, good old-fashioned coarse barbarian humor.

—SW—

Mai the Psychic Girl battles her evil counterpart, the Wisdom Alliance's psychic "enforcer," Turm Garten.

MAI, THE PSYCHIC GIRL

Written by KAZUYA KUDO; illustrated by RYOICHI IKEGAMI; translation by JAMES DINDNALL & SATORU FUJI; edited by LETICIA GLOZER

32 to 40 black-and-white pages; $1.50; bi-weekly from ECLIPSE INTERNATIONAL/VIZ COMMUNICATIONS

Mai, the Psychic Girl will be the first of Eclipse/Viz's Japanese comics to be completed. The American edition has contained two episodes in each issue. At that rate, the end will come during the Summer 1988.

Mai Kuju, the adolescent girl who is one of the five most powerful ESPers in the world, is on the run from the Wisdom Alliance, a secret worldwide organization which wants to gain control of their powers. In the first half of the novel, the Wisdom Alliance had used a powerful

and ruthless Japanese private investigative agency to do its work. The Kaieda agency was good, but Mai and the college students were better. It even looked as though a happy ending was in sight when Kaieda learned the whole story, and switched his allegiance to protect Mai (as a matter of keeping Japanese strength from falling under foreign control).

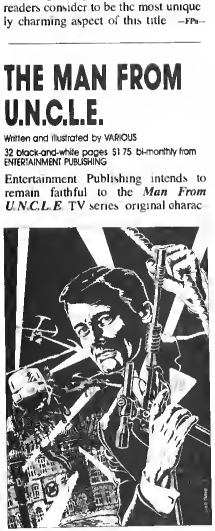
But this just brings the Wisdom Alliance directly into the conflict. The Alliance carries out its plan to recruit the other four teenagers who have great mental powers. The East German girl, Turm Garten, is sent to Japan to capture Mai. When Mai proves powerful enough to resist the ESP traps, the Wisdom Alliance finally gives up hope of ever controlling her and orders that she and her father be destroyed. Most of the issues during 1988 will feature the increasingly awesome war between Mai and other mutant teens, in the streets and in the skies of Japan. Although the drama and suspense will intensify, the story will not lose the touches of human interest humor which keep the mood from becoming too grim, and which many readers consider to be the most uniquely charming aspect of this title. —FPb—

THE MAN FROM U.N.C.L.E.

Written and illustrated by VARIOUS

32 black-and-white pages; $1.75; bi-monthly from ENTERTAINMENT PUBLISHING

Entertainment Publishing intends to remain faithful to the *Man From U.N.C.L.E.* TV series original characterizations, although upcoming issues will see more subplots developed and the introduction of the new U.N.C.L.E. agents. "The new agents will give the writers more freedom where character developement is concerned," states Entertainment spokesman Paul Howley.



Guest cover artist David Day.

Some readers have expressed hope that the TV movie—"The Fifteen Years Later Affair"—might be dealt with in the comic book. Due to readers' urging, the book's creators will keep the 1963 reunion perpetually 15 years in the future, but they may use certain plot elements from the TV movie in a forshadowing fashion.

Entertainment Publishing is also considering a full-color U.N.C.L.E. graphic novel. Events taking place in the graphic novel will have direct effect upon following issues of the main series. Readers can also look forward to more intense plot treatments in coming issues, full color photo covers, and even better artwork, which should please comic book aficionados as well as fans of the original U.N.C.L.E. episodes. —JH—

MAN OF WAR

Written by BRUCE JONES; illustrated by RICK BURCHETT; edited by APRIL CAMPBELL

32 four-color pages; $2.00; bi-monthly from ECLIPSE COMICS

As with their other Bruce Jones Eclipse titles, *Man of War* is rather up in the air. It was originally intended to be an ongoing bi-monthly series, but now, don't hold your breath waiting for issues beyond #3. The reasons are various, including a problem associated with another Jones-Eclipse title, *Hand of Fate*—the difficulty of gaining reader acceptance.

Man of War is described as being more s-f than super-hero and, thus, is further considered a little strange. Additionally, Bruce Jones says the art is "good," but somewhat "cartoony" and he wonders if readers may have a problem with that.

Though s-f more than super-hero, the premise to *Man of War* reads more typically of the latter category. The central protagonist is 20-year-old U.S. soldier Clayton Piker, who is serving in Vietnam. Unknown to him, his sergeant is an alien whose mission is to pursue an evil character from his world on Earth. When the sergeant/alien is severely injured, he decides to destroy Earth immediately rather than allow it to be subjected to the evil of his quarry. But, discovered by Piker, the soldier persuades the sergeant/alien to imbue him with the power to continue the pursuit. —PC—

MANGAZINE

Written and illustrated by VARIOUS; edited by BEN DUNN

format and frequency undetermined; from ANTARCTIC PRESS

It *has* been awhile since *Mangazine #5* appeared, hasn't it? This is largely due to the fact that Antarctic Press is an understaffed operation, and Ben Dunn has been preoccupied with art assignments for First Comics (*Dynamo Joe*) and Eclipse Comics (*Swords of Texas*), and for Antarctic Press's own highly-popular *Ninja High School*. But *Mangazine* will be returning Real Soon Now—hopefully around February 1988.

Because of the long delay since *Mangazine #5*, #6 is intended as a 64- to 80-page "giant." The price will be decided when the page-count has been finalized. "The regular series that have appeared in *Mangazine* (*The Mark Two Squad*, *Tiger X*, *Stickfigure Man*, etc.) will basically wrap up their present storylines, thus clearing the way for new stories," Ben Dunn reports. "*Mangazine* will become a showcase title as it was originally intended, with no continuing features. All stories will have a beginning, a middle, and an end. Also, *Mangazine* will be a proving ground for possible new series and ideas.

"When issue #7 comes out, it will be a more realistic 32 pages instead of the 52 pages we tried to come out with. Tentatively, *Mangazine* will contain the following in issue #7: "Messerschmitt" is a story that premiers in *Ninja High School #14* and will relate an alien invation of Earth during World War II. It will be written by Chuck Blades and art to be handled by Ben Dunn. Other works may also appear, including *X-Tiger*, *Mighty Tiny* (both are series by Dunn), and whatever else we approve." No regular price or periodicity have been set. —FPb—

MANHUNTER

Written by JOHN OSTRANDER and KIM YALE; pencilled by DOUG RICE; inked by SAM KIETH; edited by BARBARA RANDALL

32 four-color pages; $1.25; monthly from DC COMICS, INC.

A new ongoing series, *Manhunter* tells the adventure of Mark Shaw, the man who was once one of the Manhunters, then became the privateer, the Star Tsar, the Privateer again, and now he's back to being a Manhunter. After his recent appearances in *Suicide Squad* and *Millennium*, he chooses to go back to calling himself Manhunter for two reasons, first, to remind himself why he stepped out of the legal system (as he had had a successful career as a public defender), and second, to remind himself of what he became when he got his priorities twisted.

"Doug has done a fantastic redesign of the costume," says co-writer John Ostrander. "It's still the red-and-blue Manhunter costume, but there is just a touch of the Simonson/Paul Kirk *Manhunter*'s costume as well. Doug's turning out some tremendous stuff." Although Manhunter will not be "gimmicky," he will use any kind of weapon or gadget that might give him an edge.

The newly redefined Manhunter now hunts the world's most dangerous game, for a price. "He's a bounty hunter with a twist. His specialty is super-powered felons. He is not necessarily interested in confrontation, nor a fair fight if he does confront them. If he can catch them with their masks down, so to speak, he'd rather do that. He says he is not interested in stopping someone from doing evil, just tracking them down once they've committed the crime. If someone is robbing a store, he'll not stop them like Batman would do, but follow them, and nab them when they get their guard down.

"Circumstances don't always allow him to do that though. Sometimes things don't allow him to do that, and sometimes his own nature steps in. Although he keeps on saying he is not a hero, he sometimes winds up being a hero." Ostrander plans to utilize Shaw's family, a mother, step-father, and a half-brother and half-sister. An extended family will be shown, as a lot of them are in positions to do Shaw some good. "He has a lot of friends and relatives in high places, and he plans to use some of them."

The first storyline involves a villain called Dumas, who is a master assassin. Dumas's face loses its features and "slides," unless he keeps a firm image in his head of the face he wants to portray. Thus, while he can infiltrate and impersonate anyone, he cannot have a real face of his own. To keep his face steady while not on the job, he wears a plastic mask, one picked from his collection of masks.

"The first storyline is essentially about masks," says Ostrander. "Manhunter's, Dumas's, and woman named Olivia Bancroft's. She is a mask collector who wants the Manhunters mask. The story though deals with the masks that we all wear in our lives. Manhunter's mask is his business face, but he also has a family face, and a public face, and other faces for other occasions. We all have those masks or faces, and they project something of what we see ourselves to be. They are all true to the extent that this is how we want ourselves to be seen at a specific time. They are not all of ourselves, but there is no one mask that is."

Another upcoming storyline will see Manhunter in Tokyo, in an extended battle down the very Tokyo streets that artist Doug Rice recently toured.

Manhunter will premiere in late Spring. —AM—

THE MARK

Written by MIKE RICHARDSON and RANDY STRADLEY; pencilled by LARRY STROMAN; inked by ART NICHOLS; edited by RANDY STRADLEY

32 full-color pages; $1.95; bi-monthly from DARK HORSE COMICS

After going public with his existence in issue #2, the Mark finds himself a protagonist in a governmental campaign of pro-Chosen/anti-Mark publicity in issue #3. Part of the campaign involves a boxing match between a U.S. heavyweight champion and one of the Chosen. When things begin to go wrong for the Chosen's representative, the government decides to end the worldwide broadcast. Unfortunately for them, the Mark manages to continue the broadcast!

I'm gonna axe you one more time

Written by Mike Richardson solo, issue #4 will concern the Mark's run in with the State's head executioner. A new antagonist within the walls of the Warehouse will be introduced as an adversary for the Mark. Then, issue #5 will delve into the social structure of the inmates of the Warehouse, as the Archon's plans to have a son progress.

Reaction to *The Mark*, Dark Horse's second color series, has been extremely good, according to co-writer/editor Randy Stradley, "except this one guy named Edd—with two 'd's' He writes for some magazine or other, and he didn't like it much! Everyone else has reacted favorably to it, though." —AM—

THE MARKSMAN

Written by STEVE PERRIN; pencilled by PETE McDONNELL; inked by JEFF ALBRECHT; edited by DENNIS MALLONEE

32 four-color pages; $1.95; bi-monthly from HERO COMICS

The lead feature in each issue of the *Champions* solo comic will continue to be *The Marksman*, by steve Perrin, Pete McDonnell, and Jeff Albrecht. The second feature will be a series of occult mysteries starring Rose, by Dennis Mallonee and various artists.

The origin of the Marksman concludes in issue #3, and features cameo appearances by both Icestar and Rose. In her own story this issue, Rose must solve "The Mystery of Brother Basilisk."

In issue #4, the Marksman's adventures return to a contemporary setting. Doctor Destroyer, a major villain derived from the Champions role-playing game, makes his comic book debut in this story. In the Rose story, Flare makes a guest appearance in order to help Rose deal with Brother Basilisk once and for all.

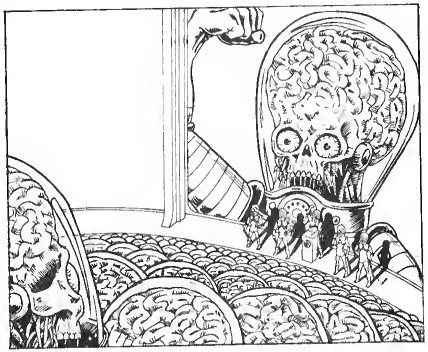
In #5, Rose takes over the lead slot for one issue, in an 18-page adventure illustrated by newcomer Noly Zamora. If sales on this issue warrant it, Rose could be appearing in her own magazine by the end of summer. —XX—

MARS ATTACKS MINI-COMIC BOOK SERIES

Written and edited by MARIO BRUNI; based on concepts created by LEN BROWN and WALLY WOOD; illustrated by VARIOUS

54-issue limited series; 32 full-color mini-pages (2¾" x 4¼"); price undetermined; twice bi-monthly from POCKET COMICS

Panel from a new Mars Attacks story, based on the classics.



New Mars Attacks material.

The famous "Mars Attacks" series of bubblegum cards, created by Len Brown and Wally Wood in 1962 for Topps, is being revived as a comic book.

Each of the premises behind the 54 classic cards will be extended into a full comic, with a different artist handling each one. (The original inspirational card will be printed in the centerspread.) Publisher Mario Bruni plans to take Len Brown's original synopsis for each card and "flesh out the details, and breathe life and death into martian and human characters." Among the artists contacted for this project are Al Williamson, Bret Blevins, Rick Veitch, John Severin, George Evans, Angelo Torres, Greg Capullo, Bruce Spaulding Fuller, Kevin Conrad, and Gus LaMonica. "Some of these names are familiar to most comics fans," says Bruni, "and some are not, but the end result as a team will be agraphic masterpiece. *Mars Attacks* will be a Woodstock of talent."

In order to keep the "look" the same throughout, Comico colorist Tom Vincent will be coloring all of them in animation cel style.

The issues will be released two at a time at bi-monthly interval beginning in the Spring. —JC—

MARSHAL LAW

Written by PAT MILLS, illustrated by KEVIN O'NEILL, edited by DANIEL CHICHESTER

32 full-color pages, $1.75, bi-monthly from MARVEL EPIC COMICS

"*Marshal Law* will go back on schedule, because we've been threatened with dire consequences if it doesn't," says Pat Mills. He goes on to explain that the introductory story featuring the Sleepman's brutal series of rapes and murders will now continue past the proposed four issues until issue #6 "by the time that Marshal Law has waded through a few seas of blood and administered all the beatings necessary."

The identity of the Sleepman will be disclosed in the fourth issue, but until that point Mills plans to continue the whodunit aspect of the strip, and suggests that the actual revelation won't necessarily be of the obvious subject. Marshal Law, meanwhile, becomes even more brutal and single-minded following the rape of his girlfriend in issue #2.

A stopover in the third issue is at Father O'Brien's Midnight Mission, a home for down and out super-heroes. Likening its creation as a parallel to the real world Reagan administration policy of having the community care for the infirm and indigent wherever possible, the Midnight is populated by pitiful and deranged characters. A winged hero minus one wing is around, and there's another individual who appears to be doing press-ups, but is in fact convinced he can push the Earth out of its orbit. Judas and Hitler are also seen wandering the streets, and it's likely that they will be the major antagonists once the first story reaches its conclusion.

Pursuing the Sleepman in #4, Marshal Law arrives at San Simeon, now the home of the Public Spirit, as the Sleepman feels he's had his way with sufficient Celeste impersonators and is now ready for the real thing. "Various super-heroes will be indulging in any kind of perversion we can think of," says Mills. "We're trying to present as degrading a picture of them as possible because it's hugely enjoyable to see." He promises the first super-hero urinal scene for that issue, and bemoans the fact that it won't be including Marshal Law personally as he's then occupied with a gun chase.

Commenting on scenes that could conceivably offend the more prudish element of the audience (who'll be recognizable from their letters of complaint beginning "I am not a prude, but ..."), Mills remains quite unrepentant. "These comics are supposedly for adults, so why hold back any longer? You might as well think of everything unspeakable rather than pushing timidly at the barriers for two years. Look for no holds barred here." —FPI—

MARTHA SPLATTERHEAD

Written and illustrated by VARIOUS, edited by MICHAEL DOWERS

approximately 48 black-and-white pages, $2.50, irregularly from STARHEAD COMICS and COMBAT RECORDS

If you pick up The Accused's second album in late spring, you won't have to keep an eye out in the comic shop for *Martha Splatterhead*, because a copy of the first issue will be enclosed. The second issue will likewise be bundled with their third album, and future album/issues may be treated similarly if the idea goes over.

"The band is supposed to be writing the story concepts for the book," says Dowers, "And the artists will be illustrating them." Only four artists have been confirmed so far: R.K. Sloane, Bob X. Ashleigh, and Peter Bagge, but more similarly offbeat comics creators are being approached.

As to who Martha is, Dowers says, "She is a character invented by The Accused, and they've been using her as a logo during performances and on their albums. She has a very strong punk haircut and pointy teeth, and she always seems to be carrying some sort of knife or axe in her hand.

"This particular book would be attractive to anyone who's into the new hardcore metal bands or into the underground-style gore comics. Basically it's in the spirit of the old underground comics, only using a whole new generation of artists. The two-word combination Dowers says he's stressing as a description of the comic is "total gore." —EV—

MARTIAN MANHUNTER

Written by J.M. DeMATTEIS, illustrated by MARK BADGER, edited by ANDY HELFER

4-issue mini-series, 32 four-color pages, $1.25, monthly from DC COMICS INC.

Spinning off from the pages of *Justice League International*, DC's green-skinned super-hero finally gets a chance to shine in his own mini-series.

Scripted by J.M. DeMatteis, *Martian Manhunter* totally restructures the character's origin, roots, background, and persona. "We're reworking everything," DeMatteis asserts. "The Martian Manhunter is a character that intrigues me because *nothing* has ever been done with him. I don't think one iota of his potential has been tapped!"

DeMatteis examines the psyche of the Martian Manhunter in the mini-series, exploring what goes on in his mind and how, from his alien background, he perceives life and super-heroics on Earth. The book also focuses on the character's super-powers, which include flight, super-strength, invisibility, telepathy, and shape-shifting. "The Martian Manhunter can virtually do *anything*," adds DeMatteis. "He should honestly be the most powerful character in the DC Universe, and able to take on Superman with one hand!" The Manhunter's powers will definately play an important role in this series as he loses control of them, especially his shape-changing abilities.

A new villain, The Death God, is introduced to plague the hero, and the JLI guest stars in *Martian Manhunter* #2.

DeMatteis, artist Mark Badger, and editor Andy Helfer are also concocting a new origin for the hero, as they "delve into his Martian heritage, taking the Manhunter back to his homeworld," according to the author. As with many characters in the post-*Crisis* DC Universe, most of the Martian Manhunter's previous stories are no longer valid in the current continuity. DeMatteis includes that "everything you've read about J'Onn J'Onzz's life on Mars is not true. By the way, J'Onn J'Onzz is *not* even his real name."

The Martian Manhunter's debut in 1955's *House of Mystery* #143 signaled the advent of DC's "Earth One" era, and predated the first appearance of the Silver Age Flash by over a year. The character was a charter member of the original Justice League of America, and also was featured sporadically as a back-up strip in miscellaneous DC titles. This mini-series marks his first full-length solo exposure.

Martian Manhunter #1 is scheduled for a February release. —MR—

MARVEL FANFARE

Written and illustrated by VARIOUS, edited by AL MILGROM

32 four-color pages, $1.50, bi-monthly from MARVEL COMICS GROUP

The February issue, #38, turns out to be a special "all female-writers-and-pencillers issue, with male cartoonists making token appearances as editors and inkers. It includes a Moon Knight story by Jo Duffy, Judy Hunt, and Bill Sienkiewicz, as well as a Rogue and Dazzler back-up by Duffy, Colleen Doran, and Terry Austin.

MARVEL TALES

Written by GERRY CONWAY, pencilled by ROSS ANDRU, inked by FRANK GIACOIA, edited by JIM SALICRUP

32 four-color pages, 75 cents, newsstand distribution, monthly from MARVEL COMICS GROUP

Having exhausted the supply of Chris Claremont/John Byrne *Marvel Team-Up* stories, Marvel returns to mid-'70s Spider-Mans for its source material. Issue #211, the first of the new year, represents #135 (funny how the reprint title is 76 issues ahead!), which features the Punisher in his pre-Frank Miller days, and the most inevitably-named Spider-villain of them all, The Tarantula.

In the new "Spider-Ham" back-up by Michael Eury, Joe Albelo, and Ron Zalme, Forbush-Man meets Spider-Ham in #211. The villainous Rhino throws Forbush-Man *out* of his comic strip, and he lands in the pages of a Peter Porker story. The pain joins forces to battle the menace of the Ironing Boar.

In *Marvel Tales* #212-214, Spider-Ham investigates a rash of plumber kidnappings and becomes involved with the Punfisher, that vicious vigilante of the Sea. Can the combined might of Spidey's powers and the Punfisher's weaponry defeat the evil Doctor Octopussycat? —EON—

MARVEL UNIVERSE

Written and illustrated by VARIOUS, edited by MIKE HIGGINS

32 four-color pages, $1.50, newsstand distribution weekly from MARVEL COMICS GROUP

Marvel's first ongoing weekly comic book series will star some, if not all, of the most popular characters in comics, yesterday and today. Each issue will contain four eight-page stories. Three will be chapters in ongoing serials, while the fourth will be a complete tale, self-contained.

The first issue will have a "Wolverine" lead feature by Chris Claremont, John Buscema and Klaus Janson, beginning a 10-part story. Plans also call for Man-Thing by Steve Gerber and Tom Sutton, and Master of Kung Fu by Doug Moench and Tom Grindberg, both beginning three-part adventures in issue #1.

Marvel Universe will offer the top writers and artists a shot at the widest variety of features, such as Daredevil, Black Widow, Silver Surfer, She-Hulk and the Foes of Spider-Man. If it exists in the Marvel Universe, expect to see it in *Marvel Universe*.

THE MASKED MAN

Written and illustrated by B.C. BOYER, edited by FRED BURKE

32 black-and-white pages, $2.00, very irregularly from ECLIPSE COMICS

March should see the release of *Masked Man* #12, in which the Masked Man loses his memory. MM then comes upon a husband and wife who have lost their son. The couple take MM in from the rain and convince him that he's their son. Through the course of the issue, the Masked Man helps the couple come to terms with their loss, and make peace with themselves.

The series is, of course, put out on an irregular basis. Burke promised that Eclipse publishes 'em "whenever they're ready. You don't rush someone like B.C. Boyer." —JW—

MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE

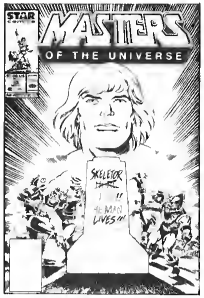
The Masked Man apologizes in this upcoming issue.

Written by GEORGE CARAGONNE, pencilled by KON WILSON, inked by DANNY BULANDI, edited by DON DALEY

32 four-color pages $1.00 bi-monthly from MARVEL COMICS

He-Man no more! Prince Adam has foresworn his identity as the defender of Eternia, leaving Skeletor to become the Master of the Universe.

Then, in the aftermath of the ***Masters of the Universe*** motion picture, Skeletor has vanished from Eternia. With Skeletor gone, the time is ripe for the Horde to invade. He-Man must return Skeletor's evil to Eternia if he is to stop the Horde.



Who'd think they'd miss Skeletor?

MAX HEADROOM 3-D

Written by WILLIAM MESSNER-LOEBS, illustrated by ARNOLD and JACOB PANDER, 3-D by RAY ZONE, edited by DIANA SCHUTZ

32 3-D pages $2.00 one-shot from COMICO

If you've got a copy of the last *Preview Special* handy, turn to the preview of ***Max Headroom 3-D***. Now take a big, black marker and draw through it. For the most part, none of that applies here now.

Starting with a new scripter, Bill Loebs, who also does *Janny Quest* for Comico, the project has been revamped. The story now follows one of the episodes that was done for the TV series. The licensers of Max Headroom did not have any direct input into the content of the series, but there were three episodes they were especially fond of, one of which is called "Blanks," which Loebs has adopted for this book.

The story concerns the new computer voted in leader of the city/state where the story takes place. He sends out an order that all of the "Blanks" be picked up. "Blanks" are computer hackers who have had their records taken off of the central computer, and in response the leader of the "Blanks" threatens to destroy the main computer system, which would throw the whole world into chaos. Therefore, Max, Edison and Viona go off to save the world. "I stayed very close to the script," says Loebs, "which is difficult, because a 32-page comic book contains as much information as a half-hour TV episode, and of course this was an hour show. It was difficult to get it all to fit, especially Max's tight dialogue." The artists for the book remain the Pander Brothers, Arnold and Jacob. Plans were announced for a ***Max Headroom*** continuing series, but now that the TV show has been cancelled, that project is up in the ozone.

—LS—

A pencilled page by the Pander Bros. from the ***Max Headroom*** *book, the story was rejected by the owners of the character*

'MAZING MAN SUMMER SPECIAL

Written by BOB ROZAKIS, illustrated by STEPHEN DeSTEFANO, edited by BARBARA RANDALL

48 four-color pages, $2.00, one-shot from DC COMICS, INC.

Not a dream, not a hoax, not an imaginary story. Also, not a reality yet. That's right, DC is still undecided on whether or not they plan to do another ***'Mazing Man Special***. The verdict is still out, until the sales figures come back on the ***Christmas Special***.

"We'd love to do another special," says writer Bob Rozakis, "but it can only be done if enough fans demand it. And, if enough fans buy it."

Well, there's your answer. If you want more 'Maze, buy the next 'Maze, then deluge DC with letters. After all, Little Helenita should be celebrating her second birthday by this time, and Brenda and Eddy's son should be celebrating his first! Yow, how time flies.

—AM—

MECHA

Written by RANDY STRADLEY, pencilled by HARRISON FONG, inked by ART NICHOLS, then ROBERT CARACCIOLI, edited by RANDY STRADLEY

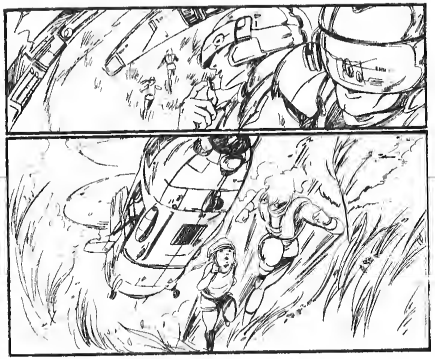
32 full-color pages, $1.95, bi-monthly from DARK HORSE COMICS

The fast-moving color series from Dark Horse, ***Mecha***, will continue its run of stories dealing with the alien symbiotic machines which a few of Earth's people can control. In #4, the Russians make their move into the South Pacific to capture young Terry Pierce's Mecha suit, only to come into contact with the U.S. Navy. Meanwhile, Hyer is locked in battle with Keene (both in their Mecha suits) above San Francisco. Will San Francisco be destroyed?

Issue #5 is entitled "Merek's Report," in which Colonel Merek recounts everything that happens in the first four issues, when all of Earth's Mecha join together for the first time. As the Mecha mother ship is discovered beneath the sea, the alien race which is intent on destroying the Mecha arrives above Earth!

The newly banded Mecha pilots and their friends take the mother ship to leave Earth in issue #6, deciding that it will be much safer to battle the aliens in space, rather than on Earth, given what happened in San Francisco in issue #4. Then in issue #7, as the Mechas battle the aliens in space, one of the team members is sucked into a black hole, with surprising effects for everyone.

—AM—



Panels from ***Mecha*** *by Harrison Fong and Art Nichols*

MECHTHINGS

Written and illustrated by BRAD W. FOSTER

32 black-and-white pages $2.00 bi-monthly from RENEGADE PRESS

"I finally came up with a title for Book One," says Foster. "It's 'Of Men, Mice, Machines and Mooses.' I'm not too sure what Book Two is going to be titled yet." Issues ***#4-6*** make up that second book, and conveniently they will be out before the next *Preview Special*.

Foster has created an elderly superhero for the story. Heavyduty Man is the seventh in his line, and with the passage of genes from generation to generation, his powers have become diluted. "It's sort of like: the first guy starts out with heat vision, and by the time you get to him, he's got 'warm vision.' He's getting older without an heir, so he builds a robot to carry on the name ("Basically he's shaped like a battery with a cape—'Heavyduty,' get it? Real subtle")

The villain each Heavyduty Man has fought in his time is Vincent von Eric, a *nearly* immortal vampire. "It suddenly dawned on me that a vampire isn't immortal, it does have a limited lifespan. The flesh does finally deteriorate beyond rejuvenation at some point. He's really old just like the Heavyduty guy is real old. This whole story came about because I had this image of a full page at the end of the story of the two robots blazing away at each other on top of a building in good Marvel style, while down at the bottom of the building there're these two old guys in wheelchairs whacking each other with canes."

The beginning of the story has Bertram and his fellow members of the Society of Unrecognized Genius discussing recent news reports of a vampire that preys on robots. When Fran Kafka, one of the members, pooh-poohs the idea, Bertram invites her to meet Ahab, who confirms the news. The action soon heats up with an appearance by the vampire himself. Or is it? (and if you've been reading closely, you know the answer)

"The vampire," says Foster, "has recognized the realness, the humanness, of robots. It's ironic that someone knows that wild robots aren't just machines, but uses that knowledge to prey on them rather than to help them.

"I want to do some stuff here," explains Foster, "Talking about the nature of a soul. This *is* a humor book, but I want to touch on that. [In my plot] vampires don't just suck blood—that's the way they suck the soul. Blood is the medium of transference." A robot is never truly dead until its 'final spark' is drained or exhausted. That, to the wild robots, is what makes the vampbot's actions so heinous. The robot constructed by Heavyduty Man somehow gets into a confrontation with the vampire creature (Foster won't let me reveal the exact plot line), and the huge fight that was Foster's initial spark ensues. Their battle destroys police headquarters, angering Captain Sam no end. Finally all of the principals crash into a deserted building in the junkyard where.

Well, here's what *I* heard, anyway. "Drained of energy, the vampire—hmm, hmmm—connecting equipment—hmmm, hmmm—you don't need to know how he dies, that's giving too much away—ummm—vampire's still killing him off—cryo— energy drain—zum, zum, zumzumzum—Hammer Films—what, how'd *that* get in there?" You'll just have to buy the book to find out.

"You've got the serious side, the action side, and the humorous side," says Foster. "This one's got a nice mix." When pressed about a basic theme for *Mechthings*, he said, "Basically what I'm trying to do is talk about prejudice and racial bigotry and all that shit without having to put it in there [blatantly] and knock them over the head with it."

Depending on sales (doesn't everything?), ***Mechthings*** may be renewed beyond the sixth issue. If so, keep an eye out for the dynamic debut of Hitler's head, the return of Max the Maximum Moose, this time with an army of flame-throwing dolls, and giant cardboard robots—maybe not *all* in the same issue.

Foster promises to continue putting in more dots and lines per inch than humanly possible. And of course he still wants you to send him toy robots (but not those stupid transforming ones). The guy has a "bot on his back.

—EY—

MEGALITH

Written by ELLIOT MAGGIN, artists undetermined

32 full-color pages, $2.00, newsstand distribution, bi-monthly from CONTINUITY GRAPHICS

The first story in the new ***Megalith*** comic is "a doozy," promises publisher Neal Adams. The two-parter begins as we flash back in to a space in time when

Back and on schedule!

Megalith has gotten to the American army base after escaping the Olympic training school where he was held captive and tells the story of that interval of time that got him finally on a plane to America to try and rescue his parents.

The second issue brings him to the mid-East where a mysterious organization offers proof of his parents' being alive. It's a ruse, but then Megalith receives help from an unexpected source.

MEGATON COMICS PRESENTS

Written by HOWARD KELNER; pencilled by JIM STARLIN; inked by HOWARD KELNER and JIM STARLIN; edited by GARY CARLSON

64 black-and-white pages; $2.00; one-shot from MEGATON COMICS

This special one-shot issue *Megaton Comics Presents ... Doctor Weird*, due out in Spring, will reprint all of Jim Starlin's early series, *Doctor Weird*. The good doctor is a man who journeyed back through time, upon stepping out of his time capsule, is caught in a robbery, shot, and killed. What a way to time-trip!

Since he has died before he was ever born, he is condemned to hover above the Earth in a ghost-like state, until time reaches the point at which he goes back into time originally. This is early Starlin work, from a fanzine called *Star-Studded*, and dates up to the point where he first started working for Marvel Comics in the early 1970s.

A new cover by Starlin will grace the book, due out in April. —AM—

MELODY

Written by SYLVIE LANCOURT; illustrated by JACQUES BOIVIN; edited by DENIS KITCHEN

32 black-and-white pages; $2.00; adults only; bi-monthly from KITCHEN SINK PRESS

Subtitled "The Autobiography of a Nude Dancer," *Melody* may be the most unusual comic of 1988.

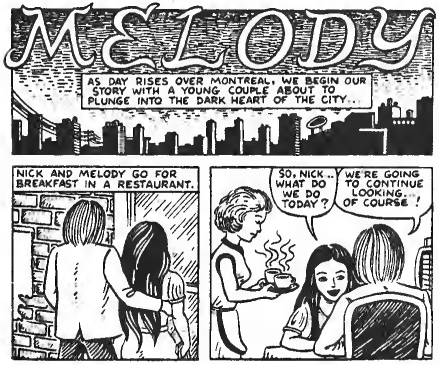
"In a weird way, it's kind of a sister title to *Omaha the Cat Dancer*, in that it's basically an adult comic," says editor/publisher Denis Kitchen. "The difference is that it's not fiction." Writing the comic is Sylvie Rancourt, a French Canadian woman who is still a nude dancer. Artist Jacques Boivin is translating the story (she doesn't speak English) and illustrating it.

Rancourt submitted the story to Kitchen "in a primitive form," says Kitchen. Although she is a cartoonist, he felt the work was "not slick enough" for the commercial market. Boivin, who was acting as an intermediary, was someone Kitchen had been "looking at for a long time as a possible contributor." Having he and Rancourt collaborate seemed "the natural solution."

"*Melody* is about the lifestyle that accompanies this kind of profession," explains Kitchen, "the characters that run the strip joints, the customers, the expectations of the customers, dealing with them both on stage and behind the scenes, her boyfriend who got her into the business, her life before she took this career and what led to it. It's really quite fascinating. It's not just a strictly titulating title. There's no question there's some erotic, stimulating elements in it, however, it's basically the story of how someone gets into this business and what it's like behind the scenes. It's pretty illuminating."

The comic currently is considered an unlimited series, because of the number of stories Rancourt feels she can tell. The first issue should be on sale in March. —BE—

Melody: Memoirs of a stripper.



MENAGERIE

Written and illustrated by VARIOUS; edited by PAULA SHOUDY and MIKE RAABE

32 black-and-white pages; $2.00; monthly from CHROME TIGER COMICS

Menagerie is an anthology title like *Albedo*, but unlike Thoughts & Images' book, it will not depend wholly on funny animals (or funny aliens ...). Its format is to have three ongoing series, and a fourth slot for single- or several-issue stories. The fifth issue will not have that fourth story, so as to allow regulars room to stretch their legs a bit.

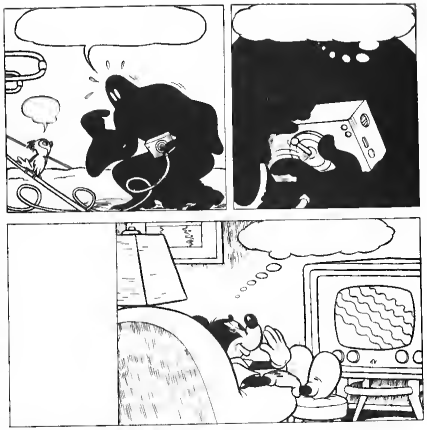
Donna Barr's *Hader and the Colonel*, which premiered in the second issue, is, she says, primarily a fairy tale. "I hate to put it that way, because it conjures up the wrong images in people's minds. You have to think more of Bruno Bettelheim's idea of the fairy tale as being a reflection of growing up." A small rabbit has been witched into being half-human and given a book of ingredients to gather, at which time the witch will make him into a man. "He starts to read the ingredients," says Barr. "And it's horrible. You can die getting any one of these." He tries for the scariest item first: the flight feather from a Vetschauer Colonel. "The Vetschauers are the kind of people that if they walked into your house and you handed them the pet cat, they would rip it in half, swallow it and thank you for the hors d'oeuvre." Hader impresses the Colonel ("Basically he's a harpy, but don't call him that to his face") with his courage, and has himself anesthetized and operated on. The Colonel ends up deciding to go on a "blood fight," basically a hunt cum return-to-nature jaunt, and aids Hader in his quest. "This is basically the Odd Couple here: the Colonel becomes like an adopted father to this kid. Hader wants to remain a child, and yet he wants to grow up too.

"Another story that's running is called *Scarycat and Mousekanaut*," says editor Raabe. "It's sort of the foundation story that runs through the book. If *Menagerie* can be said to be *about* anything, it's about them." It will be written by Paula Shoudy and illustrated by Raabe. The cat and mouse are a pair of anthropomorphics-for-hire in an alternate reality. "I just about spit teeth when I saw *Contractors* come out," he adds, "which is a little close to what we've got planned. They're a little more tongue in cheek. We're a little more hard-edged." Most of the inhabited worlds in Shoudy and Raabe's future are company-owned, and war is big business. Our heroes, with Dr. Omi, their gadgeteering genius, are hired to destroy a factor in the first continued story, but it soon becomes apparent that they have been sold out. On the run, they are overtaken by an Intergalactic Computer Chip ship (ICC being the company they have been trying to undermine), which turns out to be piloted by a pirate friend of theirs. *Then* the ICC armada shows up to reclaim their stolen ship.

Reflections, written by Lana Aprill and illustrated by Christopher Rush, tells a story of contemporary gothic horror set in Seattle. Expect the setting to be authentic, since Aprill and Rush, like all of the contributors so far to *Menagerie*, live in or near Seattle. Sebastian Rhys DeGraine is a member of the vampire elite, on the run from Jarrod Lord, the vigilante he has come grudgingly to respect. Also after him, though he doesn't know it, is Horn Grimstadr, a rogue vampire who is looking to join the elite by killing DeGraine. Another pursuer is Victoria Raven, an immortal fey who needs him alive. "Fairy Tale," says Aprill, is also an apt description of *Reflections*. "It's got a moral to it. Generally we tend to judge everything by our own standards. We see the world as if it's our world alone—everybody does it, *I* do it. It's a 'judge not' story. And then it's a romance of sorts, it's a gothic tale, it's a mystery ... but it's not really that complex. You could say all those things about *Frankenstein*."

These three stories will be running for the forseeable future, leaving a space for a fourth, rotating series of stories. *Tales of the Legion* is by writer Clifton Jackson and artist Cindy Murata. It presents episodes from the life of Montag, a barbarian prairie dog, which will run through the fourth issue before some other, as yet undetermined, feature.

Murata will be contributing the cover to the January issue. Barr's cover will follow on #4, and Raabe and Rush will be on the fronts of the next two issues. —EV—



Panels from the Italian Mickey-vs.-the-Blot story from an upcoming **Mickey and Donald**.

MICKEY AND DONALD

Written and illustrated by FLOYD GOTTFREDSON, PAUL MURRY, JACK BRADBURY and VARIOUS; edited by BYRON ERICKSON

32 four-color pages; 95 cents; newsstand distribution; eight times a year from GLADSTONE COMICS

This is the newest title in the Gladstone line, featuring stories about both Donald Duck and Mikey Mouse. Editor Byron Erickson described the contents as "a 2/3rds Mickey mix," with emphasis on the more modern Mouse. In particular, the book will be seeing Floyd Gottfredson stories from the late '40s, Paul Murry and Jack Bradbury reprints, and the long European-produced Mickey Mouse adventure stories done for Italy's weekly Disney comics magazine, *Topolino*. Four stories are planned for issue #2: a Daan Jippes Mickey Mouse story (Erickson believes it is the only Mickey that Jippes has done), a Jack Bradbury reprint, a brand new, four-page story by William (*Nervous Rex*) Van Horn, and a 10-page Donald Duck reprint by Carl Barks. Issue #3 will feature the Floyd Gottfredson newspaper serial from 1947 that introduced the character of Eega Beeva, Mickey's alien friend. Though pretty much forgotten in this country, Eega Beeva has been popular in Europe, and writers and artists there have used the character frequently in their original Disney stories. The reprinting of Eega Beeva's origin will reintroduce him to American readers and set the stage for reprinting the European stories that feature him. Also on tap for future issues is a serialization of an epic length, Italian-produced Mickey Mouse vs. the Phantom Blot thriller. —DRD—

MICKEY MOUSE

Written and illustrated by FLOYD GOTTFREDSON; edited by BYRON ERICKSON

32 four-color pages; 95 cents; newsstand distribution; 10 times a year from GLADSTONE COMICS

As before, the book will continue to serialize classic Floyd Gottfredson newspaper-strip adventures from the '30s. Issues #237 through #239 will feature "Rags for Riches" from the last half of 1935, and #240 will begin serializing the following story. Covers will be by Daan Jippes. —DRD—

MIGHTY MOUSE

Written and illustrated by VARIOUS; edited by JIM MAIN

28 full-color pages; $1.50; newsstand distribution; monthly from SPOTLIGHT COMICS, INC.

Mighty Mouse #4 sports a cover by Jerry Ordway, following the book's tradition of highlighting cover illos by popular comics pros (Paul Chadwick on #1, Curt Swan on #2, and Joe Staton on #3). That issue opens with "The Vapor Villains of Venus," a 16-page lead feature written and pencilled by Doug Cushman and inked by Bud Gordiner. Rounding out #4 is an 8-page Mighty Mouse adventure that was undetermined at press time.

John A. Wilcox and Mark Marcus will collaborate with artist Dennis Yee on #5's "Just a Matter of Time," where Mighty Mouse is forced to travel to a prehistoric era on a mission to rescue two mice with important ancestral links to the citizens of contemporary Terrytown. The cover for #5 is pencilled by Yee and inked by Rick Bryant.

Mighty Mouse #6, with a Doug Cushman cover, includes a *Land that Time Forgot* take-off, brimming with Edgar Rice Burroughs isms. Editor Jim Main provides that script.

Spotlight's agreement with Viacom International, owner of the Mighty Mouse trademark, allows the comics title to use villains and supporting characters from the original cartoons, plus integrate new creations into the strip. —ME—

MIGHTY MOUSE ADVENTURE MAGAZINE

Written and illustrated by VARIOUS; edited by JIM MAIN

48 black-and-white magazine-sized pages; $2.00; newsstand distribution; quarterly from SPOTLIGHT COMICS, INC.

Each issue of *Mighty Mouse Adventure Magazine* will feature two or three stories starring the magazine's title star, plus back-up tales usually consisting of Deputy Dawg and Heckle and Jeckle.

The second issue boasts three Mighty Mouse episodes: "Grandpa Pureheart's Will," written by Steve Keeter and drawn by Mike Kazaleh (who has also worked with the Ralph Bakshi animation studios on CBS-TV's *Mighty Mouse: The New Adventures*); Joe Gill and George Broderick's "The Terrible Tiger," a parody of professional wrestling where the Heroic Rodent enters the ring to wrestle Tiger Tom; and "Long John Catnip," a Steve Keeter story featuring modern-day pirates terrorizing cruise ship passengers. Also on hand is "Destruction Company," a Heckle and Jeckle entry by Jim Main, Doug Cushman, and Bud Gordinier, and Deputy Dawg in "Circus Sleuth," written and pencilled by Rusty Haller and inked by Jorge Pacheco.

Also in an upcoming issue, Mighty Mouse will meet Calamity Charlie, a character who is constantly followed by a series of disasters and misfortunes.

Joining *Mighty Mouse Adventure Magazine* on the stands this February is *Cartoon Quarterly*, a publication showcasing cartoon animation. Edited by noted animation scholars Jim Korkis and John Cawley, *Cartoon Quarterly* will include articles on new and old cartoon projects, interviews with famous animators, and pictorial studio tours. The premiere edition will focus on Bob Clampett, creator of *Beany and Cecil*. —ME—

MIRACLE SQUAD

Written by JOHN WOOLEY, pencilled by TERRY TIDWELL, inked by GARY DUMM, edited by HILARY HUGHES

32 black-and-white pages, $1.75, soon from APPLE COMICS

Although the final details haven't been completely ironed out at this writing, publisher Mike Catron and writer John Wooley are certain they've reached an agreement. So unless the sun suddenly goes nova, folks, we'll be seeing the continuation of this series that was begun as part of the late Upshot line.

Wooley, who is a movie and country music critic for an Oklahoma newspaper, says that the fictional Miracle Pictures Studio, the king of the low-budget B-features, is based on the historically real Mascot Studio from the '30s. But while the first four books published by Upshot had to do with gangsters trying to take over the studio, the next installments of the series will take us down John Steinbeck-*Grapes of Wrath* territory, as Dake Bennett, cowboy star, goes to his hometown in 1937 and tries to visit his father. His father, however, is nowhere to be found.

And, with the assistance of the female individual down the road, and a few of the Miracle Squad members, Dake tries to learn what's happened to his father, in a story that takes on the tone of the mystery and horror genres. Without giving anything away, Wooley says that the story hinges on the image he gained when he once saw a bedpost honey combed with bedbugs. The person who had slept on the post hadn't noticed them until it was too late. —ABC—

Miracleman and *Miraclewoman*

MIRACLEMAN

Written by ALAN MOORE, illustrated by JOHN TOTLEBEN, edited by CAT YRONWODE

32 four-color pages, 95 cents, bi-monthly from ECLIPSE COMICS

Following plots conceived over five years ago when the strip was running in *Warrior*, Alan Moore plans to conclude his involvement with *Miracleman* after the completion of Book Three in issue #16 of this title. "By that time there'll be a 1980s synthesis of the best of old legends, re-connecting the super-hero to the motherlode," promises Moore. "I'm taking back all of the discarded trappings of the super-hero, the fortress of solitude, Krypto, the super-hero family. I think they are all wonderful ideas that should be entrenched forever. It'll be like Mort Weisinger 20 years on," he said, referring to the editor of the Superman titles during the 1960s.

Moore is particularly pleased with the depth of material to be presented in the final issues, again likening them to Mort Weisinger-edited titles in which six earth shattering events or revelations could occur in as many panels, bridged only by captions. "It'll be done a little more gracefully, though," Moore promises.

After the parameters of the universe in which Miracleman operates have been disclosed in issue #12 we learn of Earth's promotion in galactic eyes as Moran's baby heralds the dawn of intelligent life on the planet to their way of thinking. It also brings the planet into the centuries old conflict between the Qys and the Warpsmiths.

Kid Miracleman finally re-emerges from within Johnny Bates in particularly harrowing circumstances in issue #14, leading to a very horrific battle in the following issue. Also appearing are the Firedrakes, a group of superheroes that Moore likens to Miracleman's own version of the Justice League.

"By the end of issue #16 I'll have brought the Miracleman world to a completely different situation. It will be definitive and concrete, although nothing like our own or *Watchmen*," said Moore. The title will continue past issue #16 when both Moore and Totleben depart, and although not finalized as of writing it seems likely that a British writer and artist team will succeed them. —FPI—

MISTER X

Written and art directed by DEAN MOTTER, illustrated by SETH, edited by BILL MARKS

28 full-color pages, $2.25, bi-monthly from VORTEX COMICS

The current "Nightclubs and Daydreams" storyline will climax in issue #14 following the renovation and reconstruction of Radiant City. The plot revolves around the record and nightclub industries in Radiant City.

Beginning in the near future, *Mister X* will feature a back-up series called "Tales From Somnopolis." It will be drawn by Dale McKean, a bright new talent from England, whose work can be seen in *Hellblazer* and the upcoming DC mini-series featuring Black Orchid.

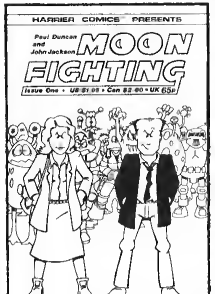
On upcoming covers, *Mister X* will feature such guest artists as Mike Kaluta, Frank Miller, Brendan McCarthy, Ken Steacy, Richard Bruning (+ non-illustrative cover) and Maurice Vellekoop. —SW—

MOONFIGHTING

Written by PAUL DUNCAN, illustrated by JOHN JACKSON, edited by MARTIN LOCK

4-issue mini-series, 24 black-and-white pages, $1.95, bi-monthly from HARRIER COMICS

Now, which TV show do you think this parodies, then? No, not *Holmes and Yoyo*. Need a clue? suppose I tell you that the comic features a moon-based detective agency run by Cybil Sheepdog and in the first issue she meets her partner to be, Bruce Gillis. Yup, any resemblance to persons living or dead must be entirely down to coincidence. *Star Trek* it ain't.



"Cybil Sheepdog and Bruce Gillis"

Promising character development over parody, Duncan's first issue introduces the stars (and the moon) in a story concerning the competition between two companies supplying air to the enclosed Moon settlements. If this series proves a success the title will appear regularly, so you know what to do. —FPI—

MORE TALES FROM GIMBLEY

Written and illustrated by PHIL ELLIOTT

one-shot, 24 black-and-white pages, $1.95, from HARRIER COMICS

Last year's *Tales From Gimbley* one-shot presented Phil Elliott's now balding fabulist recounting enigmatic humorous tales from the days when he sported a tremendous quiff, so it's only logical that *More Tales From Gimbley* shouold present more of the same. You'll see Gimbley's involvement with the Japanese community and the growing statue, along with a number of one-page strips that are generally less outrageous and more reflective in nature. —FPI—

MORPHS

Written and illustrated by VARIOUS, edited by JIM GROAT

32 black-and-white pages, $2.00, bi-monthly from GRAPHXPRESS

Morphs is a funny-animal anthology title. It consists of four to six short stories per issue, although some of the stories are installments of serialized "novels." *Morphs* was originally intended as a showcase for talented fan artists who could not afford to print their own independent comics, so they could get some professional experience and try out their story concepts in public. That is still its main goal, but *Morphs* is now also accepting works from some established comics writers and artists—mostly experimental works and individual stories too short to be published elsewhere.

Morphs #4 will present the conclusions to two stories serialized since the first issue. Tom Owens's "Star Lizard" and Phil Morrissey's "Punk Mutants on Controlled Substances," plus the second installments of two serials which started in #3. Donna Barr's "Bosom Enemies" and Darin Davis's "Botswana Bison." Finishing out the issue will be a new "Kitty Malone" short story by John Speidel which is a sequel to Kitty's archaeological treasure hunt in #2. Kitty will meet Azizi, a zebra warrior maiden who is also looking for the lost idol. Groat says that fannish reaction to preliminary sketches of Azizi shown at recent conventions has been so positive that she will either become a regular supporting character in Kitty's adventures or will get her own stories.

Editor/publisher Jim Groat will begin his own "Danger Bear" serial in *Morphs #5*, which will also contain the third installments of Donna Barr's and Darin Davis's serials. The remaining contents haven't yet been decided, but they will include two of the following three choices: another "Kitty Malone" story by John Speidel, the first episode of Mel White's "Shakedown Cruise," or an independent short story by one of several artists.

Morphs #6 will include the fourth (and probably final) episodes of Donna Barr's and Darin Davis's series, the second episode of Jim Groat's and either the first or second of Mel White's, with one spot left to fill. Groat says that one of his biggest disappointments since starting *Morphs* is that there are a number of highly talented funny-animal fan artists whose work deserves to be published professionally. But that he hasn't been able to persuade them to make the jump from fan to pro yet, while he's being deluged with submissions that are so bad that... well, you don't want to know how bad they are! (How bad *are* they...!?) Graphxpress is serious about aggressively soliciting funny-animal stories by new artists, but that doesn't mean that they will automatically accept everything that is submitted to them. *Morphs* has to remain of high enough quality that the public will continue to buy it, not an easy task in these days of the black and white comics bust. —FPI—

Donna Barr panel from **Morphs**

MR. FIXITT

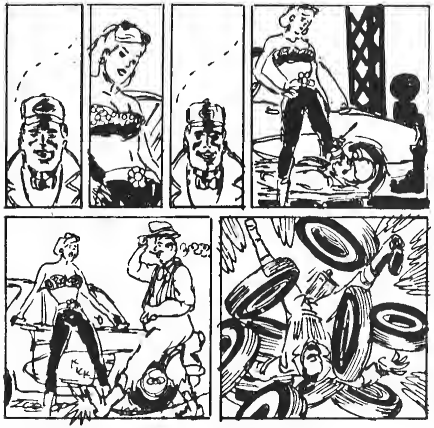
Written by CRAIG BOLDMAN, drawn by HOWARD BENDER, edited by MIKE CATRON

28 black-and-white pages, $1.75, every six weeks from APPLE COMICS

For most of us a Big Snafu is something that happens in our personal lives. In *Mr. Fixitt* the Big Snafu is something that's happened to the entire timestream. And, not incidentally, the axis of the Earth has been tilted to that you have to go west, young man, to reach the North Pole.

This book takes place an unspecified number of years B.S. (you knew that was coming, didn't you?), when Abe Lincoln is President, bi-planes are flying everywhere, and you can walk through different time zones that exist side-by-side. Artist Howard Bender believes the possibilities are endless in such a universe, and this writer—who immediately had visions of Ben Franklin extolling the virtues of kitty litter, which wasn't invented until the 1930s—concurs with him.

The hero of the title is Tom Fixitt, an average, happy-go-lucky guy of slightly above average intelligence, and who also has the spectacular talent of being able



Howard Bender's thumbnails for **Ms. Fixitt**.

to fix practically any machine that's thrown his way. For two stories in every issue, up to the first six, at least, he'll be working at Roy Boy's gas station. Assisted by Veeza, his female robot co-worker, he'll frequently have to drive through the various time zones in search of parts for busted machinery.

Bender stresses that the tone of the stories will be ironic in a moderately amusing sense of the word. For instance, while there will be some super-heroes who are secondary characters in this universe, whenever they think they've saved the world, in reality it's been saved by Tom Fixitt, who's mended some piece of equipment on the side for reasons of his own (such as finishing up for the day). Bender thinks that those who enjoyed the Jimmy Olsen-as-Blob stories for Superman that he and Craig Boldman did should also dig this book, the first issue of which will be out in April.

Wait a second. Where's that nasty *ping* coming from, and does that *thum* have anything to do with it? —ABC—

MR. JIGSAW SPECIAL

Written by RON FORTIER. Illustrated by GARY KATO

one-shot. 32 black-and-white pages. $1.75. from OCEAN COMICS

Mr. Jigsaw who doesn't yell "Split!" but does it anyway (if you know what I mean . . .) will appear in the Spring. It will be in the same format that had been planned for its release in November. Ocean Comics' Bob Palin has hopes for a regular series, which will depend on the special's sales.

The four short stories in the special will tell the would-be super-hero's origin and highlight three days in his life after moving to Portland, Oregon. He was born with the ability to control his detachable limbs and head, as revealed in the first part's reprint from Charlton's *Scary Tales*. He finds an apartment, locates a job as a shoe clerk, and meets Police Lieutenant Boltz for the first time in the book's new material. —EV—

MR. MONSTER

Written by MICHAEL T. GILBERT, pencilled by MICHAEL T. GILBERT and VARIOUS, inked by MICHAEL T. GILBERT, edited by MICHAEL T. GILBERT and RANDY STRADLEY

32 black-and-white pages. $1.75. monthly from DARK HORSE COMICS

Returning from his appearances in his own Eclipse series, *Wacky Squirrel Summer Special*, and *Dark Horse Presents* #14 (not counting the cover of this very *Preview Special*), Doc Stearn reappears in his own monthly series!

The first six issues of everyone's favorite monster-masher will tell the complete, real, honest-to-gosh, unfabricated, completely substantiated origin of Mr. Monster, in a monstrous way. Issue #1, titled "Origins, Part One," will tell the story of one of the original Mr. Monsters, the father of the current version. Similar to "The Ghost Who Walks" (The Phantom), there have been generations of "The Men Who Kill The Ghosts And Other Assorted Evilbadguy-monsterthings Who Walk." Others may find comparisons to a certain grouping of "the green," but Gilbert assures me that this is not the "Parliament of Mr. Monsters."

In issue #1, Daddy Stearn assumes the mantle of Mr. Monster, and meets Mommy Stearn. Eventually they are married, and in issue #2, become the proud parents of a baby Stearn! "The Stearns' marriage is a very tragic affair," whimpers creatorperson Michael T. Gilbert. "Stearn marries Mrs. Stearn on the rebound from another relationship. The old girlfriend is eventually revealed as Kelly's mother! (Holy family-affair, Monsterfans!) Baby Stearn's parents' relationship is not a very good one, needless to say."

Disaster ensues when Mr. Monster retires, and although Baby Stearn wants to carry on the tradition, Mommy Stearn does not want any more monster-bashing going on. "Though they try to keep his heritage a secret, he has a natural-born instinct for monster killing. Every now and then he slips around the corner, and kills a few bats or something." Stearn's first meeting with Kelly will be revealed, as well as the gradual development of their relationship.

"This is going to be a much more serious storyline than I've ever done on *Mr. Monster* than before," says Gilbert. "It's also longer and more complex than past stories have been. We aren't going to be losing any of the weirdness, though. It should be a corker of a book."

The first two issues will reprint the two original *Mr. Monster* stories from 1946, upon which the whole series was based. Future issues will probably reprint Dr. Drew back-ups from the '40s and '50s.

Mr. Monster will premiere in late December. (A corker?) —AM—

From the upcoming **Mr. Jigsaw Special**. *All puns too obvious here.*

MS. MYSTIC

Written by NEAL ADAMS. pencilled by VARIOUS. inked by NEAL ADAMS

32 full-color pages. $2.00. bi-monthly from CONTINUITY GRAPHICS

In the third issue of *Ms. Mystic*, which is still written and drawn entirely by Neal Adams, Ms. Mystic goes mad, and death (not hers) will bring her to her senses. Issue #4 introduces a new penciller, Fernando Fernandez (last seen on Catalan Communications' *Zora* graphic novel). As for the story, "there's some heavy behind-the-scenes stuff going on here," says Adams. "It has to do with major international companies changing our planet without our permission and using governmental agencies and regulations *and* unscrupulous organizations of a global nature to protect them as they achieve their ends."

The only barrier to this plot is Dr. Raas, who must be discredited at any cost. But Dr. Raas is a chessmaster supreme and even Ms. Mystic is nothing but a pawn in his game to save the world. Future issues will also include a robot called "The Stopper," and a sinister plan to create another Hawaiian island.

MS. TREE

Written by MAX ALAN COLLINS. pencilled by TERRY BEATTY. inked by GARY KATO. edited by BARB COLLINS

32 two-color pages. $2.00. monthly from RENEGADE PRESS

In January, issue #44, "Coming of Rage" concludes in a chapter entitled "Victims of Circumstance," in which Ms. Tree and her arch-enemy Dominique Muerta join forces to rescue their children from a trio of inept but deadly kidnappers. The 12-page *Ms. Tree* chapter is backed up by a "Mike Mist Minute Mist-ery" (written by managing editor Barb Collins) and a classic Johnny Dynamite story by Pete Morisi from 1954.

Issues #45-48 will feature a serial called "Murder Cruise." Mike Mist joins Ms. Tree and the entire Tree Investigations staff on a vacation cruise that soon becomes a busman's holiday when a murder is committed on board. During "Murder Cruise," the "Minute Mistery" will be dropped, adding two page to the Ms. Tree feature, which will be broken into two seven-page chapters per issue for the run of the story.

"Fallen Tree" is a special two-parter in issues #49 and 50, in which Ms. Tree is mortally wounded and dies. In issue #50, to celebrate the life and death of one of independent comics' longest running characters, the book will feature a port folio of special drawings of Ms. Tree by various guest cartoonists.

If the *Ms. Tree* comic book goes past #50, the next continuity would be a flashback story detailing an early Tree Investigations case. —ZZ—

Neal Adams's **Ms. Mystic** *in action.*

MYTHCONCEPTIONS

Adapted by BETH MITCHRONEY from the novels by ROBERT ASPRIN. Illustrated by KEN MITCHRONEY. edited by RICHARD PINI

32 black-and-white pages. $1.75. bi-monthly from APPLE COMICS

The graphic adaptation of the second novel in the popular Richard Asprin series of fantasy hi-jinks will boast a new look (which stands to reason, as Mitchroney is a different person than Phil Foglio) and additional supporting characters. Mitchroney is very excited about his work on the book, and thinks that fans of the graphic adaptation of *Another*

Aahz doing what he does best in **Mythconceptions**.

Fine Myth will be just as pleased. For a plot synopsis, see the previous issue of this fine, fine, superfine magazine. Or better yet, read the novel, thus giving Asprin some royalties, and then buy the adaptation, thus perpetuating this fine industry of ours. —ABC—

THE 'NAM

Written by DOUG MURRAY; pencilled by WAYNE VANSANT; inked by GEOF ISHERWOOD; edited by LARRY HAMA

32 four-color pages, $1.25; monthly from MARVEL COMICS GROUP

The 'Nam color comic will become direct-only with the January issue, as the award-winning series continues to recount the true-to-life adventures of the 23rd Mechanized Infantry Division throughout the Vietnam War, as told by Vietnam veteran Doug Murray.

For the newsstand, there will be a new, magazine-format series of ***The 'Nam***, with 48 pages each issue. ***The 'Nam Magazine*** will begin by reprinting the famous earlier issues of the comic book series by Doug Murray and Michael Golden.

NEAR TO NOW

Written by VARIOUS; illustrated by VARIOUS; edited by DENNIS PIMPLE

32 black-and-white pages, $2.00; thrice yearly from FANDOM HOUSE

Near to Now is Fandom House's science fiction anthology series, featuring work by Jerry Siegel, Scott Johnson, Matt Howarth, T. Motley, John McColloch, Norm Dwyer, and Dennis Pimple, among others. Issue #3, scheduled for April, 1988, will feature at least one installment of Siegel's *Sgt. Space Cop* series, drawn by Scott Johnson; a *Sailers* story by Johnson, and Motley's indiscernible "Mission Mars."

"Except for ***Acme Comics*** (Fandom House's fanzine), each of our comics is primarily the work of one creator, with support from others in the group," said Pimple. "Scott Johnson wanted to do *Sailers* as a series of short installments, along with other stuff, so we developed ***Near to Now***. Luckily, folks like Siegel and Howarth had material that fit into the format well. I'm quite proud of the book.

"Of course, I'd say that even if it weren't so," he concluded.

NEAT STUFF

Written and illustrated by PETER BAGGE; edited by GARY GROTH

32 black-and-white pages, magazine sized, $2.25; thrice yearly from FANTAGRAPHICS BOOKS, INC.

The tenth issue of ***Neat Stuff*** shines the spotlight on that little known man of mystery, Tate. And by the time "Citizen Tate" is over, no doubt we'll know more about him than we ever wanted to know.

"Everybody tells me they don't remember him," explains creator Peter Bagge. "He's Studs Kirby's best friend, Tate. I've been using him for years."

Ohhhhhh, yeah, *that* guy.

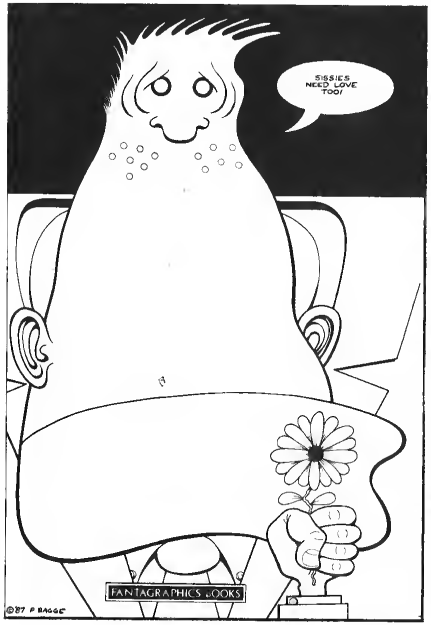
"Anyhow, this story with Tate is called 'Citizen Tate' and it shows how he's like an over-zealous good citizen, always reporting these petty crimes on his neighbors. It shows how something like that could actually be a very unpleasant character trait." Bagge reports that the story is partly inspired by the attitude of natives of the state where he resides who tend to be suspicious of bizarros—like, say, people from California. "They don't like people from California and they're very suspicious of them and spy on them. They think drugs and prostitutes and bad drivers are all because of Californians coming up here."

This long tale will be supplemented by a two pager featuring Junior called "The Thinker" (Oh uh!) and a Chuckie-boy short, in what Bagge refers to as the "Sissy" issue.

Bagge admits that ***Neat Stuff*** has also run up against the mind-boggling roadblock that so many comics face today—the minimum order paradox. "When an issue comes out, let's say a store orders ten copies. If they ordered ten copies of the early issues, they might [have sold] those out in a month, two months. But now, say when #8 came out, they're still only ordering ten, and that ten will sell in a week or a day, but they refuse to place bigger orders. When they try to reorder, the distributors don't have any because they refuse to increase their order, either. So the last couple of issues, no less than two weeks after it comes out I get flooded by letters from readers who say they can't get it. There's a bigger demand for the book than ever, but the retailers and distributors just won't order more copies, they're ordering less of it!"

Now *that's* weird. —HMacD—

The sissified cover to ***Neat Stuff*** *#10*



Neil and Buzz in Time and Space unites the talents of George Alec Effinger and Henry Mayo.

NEIL AND BUZZ IN TIME AND SPACE

Written by GEORGE ALEC EFFINGER; adapted and illustrated by HENRY MAYO; edited by GARY GROTH

3 issue limited series; 32 black-and-white pages, $2.00; monthly from FANTAGRAPHICS BOOKS

Join astronauts Neil and Buzz as they:

—Fly to the end of the universe in search of space/time paradoxes and find a popular New Jersey amusement park.

—Play a game of ice hockey at absolute zero, which is perfectly safe provided you don't trip and fall.

—Make three attempts to get to the beach at Normandy in 1944 and die each time.

All of which is complicated by the fact that Buzz is not really Neil's old friend at all but an alien demon bent on conquering the Earth and ruining his exercise program. George Alec Effinger, the multiple award-winning author of *What Entropy Means to Me* and *When Gravity Falls*, assembled this series from "material of mine I especially like, ranging from bizarre humor to grim realism to heroic self-sacrifice."

NEMO: The Classic Comics Library

Written and illustrated by VARIOUS; edited by RICK MARSCHALL

64 black-and-white pages, $3.95; monthly from FANTAGRAPHICS BOOKS

Only four issues of ***NEMO*** came out in 1987, but things should be a lot better in 1988. The powers-that-be at Fantagraphics have promised editor Rick Marschall an increase to monthly frequency (the magazine nominally has been a bi-monthly). With three issues "in-house" ready to go at press time, Marschall foresees little problem in meeting such a schedule.

Issue #28, due in January, focuses on ethnic images in the comics. The inspiration for the issue was a showing on the subject at the Balch Institute in Philadelphia. Accompanying the articles will be reprints of *Torchy Brown*, a '50s adventure strip about a young black woman fighting sexism and racism, written by Jackie Ormes.

Issue #29 will cover feature Frank King's *Gasoline Alley*. Contents will include a portfolio of '30s Sunday pages from the strip, called "Flights of Fancy," featuring Skeezix on a magic carpet. Rounding out the issue will be a look at *Ming Foo*, an oriental adventure strip by Nicholas Afonsky; an interview with Ferd Johnson, longtime artist on *Moon Mullins*; and a run of *Texas Slim* pages from the '20s to the '40s.

The all-*Peanuts* issue has been moved

From the "Ethnic Images" issue of NEMO

back to issue #30. A lengthy interview with Charles Schulz is featured, as well as selected reprints and a checklist of *Peanuts* related merchandise.

Issue #31 will be the long promised *Yellow Kid* issue. Also included are *The Ting Lang Kids* by Charles Saalberg, *Will Rogers* by Will Rogers, and a gallery of World War II cartoons.

An all-Billy De Beck issue is slated for #32. In addition to strip reprints, there will be articles on De Beck by Ron Goulart, Tom Inge, Mark Johnson, Ed Black and Donald Phelps. —BE—

NEOMEN

Co-written and edited by DAN VADO; co-written and illustrated by GARY WINNICK

32 black-and-white pages; $1.75; bi-monthly from SLAVE LABOR GRAPHICS

In the second issue Nom finds a child with a pure strain blood type and brings him back to the Citadel.

Unknown to him the Citadel is under siege by the mutant Ravagers who have traced Nom's tracks back to the underground fortress. *Neomen* will conclude with issue #4. In that issue, the Neomen will have their final conflict with the Mutant horde.

NEW AMERICA

Written by JOHN OSTRANDER and KIM YALE; illustrated by GARY KWAPISZ and AUBREY BRADFORD; edited by TIM TRUMAN

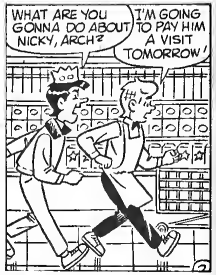
4-issue limited series; 32 four-color pages; $1.75; monthly from ECLIPSE COMICS

The last two issues of *New America* will appear in 1988. It is one of the two mini-series (the other being *Swords of Texas*) designed as a bridge for the four-month leave of absence Tim Truman took from his book, *Scout*.

New America covers the 12-year period that occurs between the end of the old *Scout* title and the beginning of the new *Scout* title. The story is told through the diary of Lt. Rosa Winter, former confidante to the President of the U.S. The country is in the midst of a war with newly Communist Mexico. The story will examine Rosa as she goes through four phases as rebel, soldier, general and finally leader. She is involved in assassinations, kidnappings and actual terrorist attacks in the name of the Southwestern Free States, and she becomes more and more concerned with the morality behind her acts. In the end she becomes a very changed person, and actually becomes an oppressor in the new *Scout* series. *New America* watches as a very sympathetic character changes into something at the other end of the spectrum, and underlying in the book are the changes that the country goes through as a result of a 12-year Civil War.

Scout, the character, will return in March under the new title, *Scout: War Shamans* immediately following the end of this series. —ES—

Gary Kwapisz shows his stuff in New America



Archie at one of the Seven Ages of Man.

THE NEW ARCHIES

Written and illustrated by VARIOUS; edited by VICTOR GORELICK

32 four-color pages; 75 cents; newsstand distribution; bi-monthly from ARCHIE COMIC PUBLICATIONS, INC.

This new title, inaugurated late last year to capitalize on the current (new last fall) satmorn cartoon show, depicts Archie and the gang as 11-year-olds attending Riverdale *Junior* High. Naturally, Miss Grundy, Mr. Weatherbee and the rest guide their school days during this middle period, just as they did during the "Little Archie" days and will continue to do in the mainstream, "current" stories.

It's still early in the development of this period of the lives of the Riverdale crew. Therefore, 1988 will see early explorations of this phase of their relationships, and of such new characters as Amani, Eugene, and "Fangs."

The listing for *Archie* gives a rundown on writers and artists whose work can be expected to be seen here. —DM—

THE NEW BREED

Written by MARK L. HAMLIN and ROGER McKENZIE; illustrated by UNKNOWN at press time; edited by ROGER McKENZIE

32 black-and-white pages; $1.95; bi-monthly from PIED PIPER PRESS

Another new property from Pied Piper, also created by Hamlin and McKenzie, *The New Breed* is set in a far-future, post-holocaust world.

In this world, the super-human progeny of the remnants of humanity quest to re-establish human civilization and society in an often hostile New World.

The genetically selected and engineered humans will be dedicated to rebuilding the world without repeating the mistakes of the past. All their considerable "talents" will be devoted to that end.

This title is still in the working stages, but publisher Hamlin believes it should be in the stores sometime during the first half of 1988. He also stresses that the book is not just another post-holocaust fable. —SW—

NEW HUMANS

Written by PAUL O'CONNOR; pencilled by KEVIN VAN HOOK; inked by JIMMY PALMIOTTI

40 black-and-white pages; $1.95; monthly from ETERNITY COMICS

The New Humans is the first spin-off from Eternity's very successful *Ex-Mutants* title. Four people, Kelly Brock, Calvin Gordon, Duke Goldberg and Roger Brunner, were put into deep sleep for six months as a part of a government experiment. "Unfortunately," said writer Paul O'Connor, "the world was destroyed by a nuclear war and their six months was extended to 30 years!"

The first few issues followed the four around as they coped with their new environment, even sending them to post-holocaust England. With the fourth issue, however, *New Humans* takes a bold new direction. In the first of a three-part epic, O'Connor plans to solve the mystery of living cartoon characters and dead movie actors that have been popping up in previous issues. "And I'm also going to reveal the final fate of Great Fred, once and for all. After that, one of the New Humans will be revealed as a traitor. And after *that*, one of them will die!"

O'Connor is also planning to emphasize the characters far more than was evident in the past. "All is not as it seems," he said. "Basically, you've got civilized people gradually losing their inhibitions and adapting to a bizarre and cruel environment—an environment where there are no rules or regulations. All the characters will be undergoing changes as this realization begins to sink in. The tension between them is already extremely high, yet they are bound by their common origin—they are the only true humans left on the face of the globe. It will be interesting, no doubt, about that."

New Humens, new publisher

THE NEW L.I.F.E. BRIGADE

Written by CRAIG A. STORMON and GUY KATICH; illustrated by CRAIG A. STORMON, TONY SANTANGELO, JIM MILLER, LOUIS PARADIS, JON CARR; edited by CRAIG A. STORMON

32 black-and-white pages; $1.80; from BLUE COMET PRESS

The *New L.I.F.E. Brigade #3* starts off with a 10-pager written, pencilled, and lettered by creator Craig A. Stormon and inked by cover artist Tony Santangelo. Called "The Turning," it stars Shandazar, who will join the Brigade, as well as the mysterious bounty-hunter that showed up in the first two issues. Also in that issue is "My Father, My Enemy," pencilled by Jim Miller, a story described by editor Stormon as "a blistering tear grabber—a father searching for a son that hates him! And for good reason!" The issue is rounded off by "Blue Comet Meets Cometra," which tells the tale of the Blue Comet's origin.

What kind of a name is Rochel?

THE NEW MUTANTS

Written by LOUISE SIMONSON; pencilled by BRET BLEVINS; inked by TERRY AUSTIN; edited by CARL POTTS

32 four-color pages; $1.00; newsstand distribution; monthly from MARVEL COMICS GROUP

Cypher is dead, and, to all appearances, so are the X-Men. So the New Mutants decide to don their graduation costumes and strike out on their own, carrying on the mission begun years ago by Professor Xavier—in essence becoming the new X-Men.

Pencilled cover for upcoming New Mutants

In the process, one of the New Mutants will lose his (her?) powers, and Magik will fight Forge, beginning events that will lead into the major *X-Men/New Mutants/X-Factor* storyline that will change Illyana permanently.

Issues #62 and #63 will have special art teams—#62 is pencilled and inked by Jon J. Muth (of *Moonshadow*, *Dracula* and the upcoming *Havok and Wolverine* limited series), and #63 is pencilled by Bo Hampton and inked by Joe Rubinstein.

NEW TEEN TITANS

Written by MARV WOLFMAN; pencilled by EDUARDO BARRETO; inked by ROMEO TANGHAL; edited by BARBARA RANDALL

The industrious George Perez strikes again with this cover to ***New Teen Titans***.

32 four-color pages, $1.75, newsstand distribution monthly from DC COMICS INC.

Issue #41 concludes the two-part story featuring the return of Wildebeast, the man who framed the Titans for his murder late in 1987. He has broken the very pregnant Mother Mayhem out of S.T.A.R. labs, but for what purpose? What will her child, the child of Brother Blood, be? And what is her secret?

Curt Swan will be guest-drawing issue #42's battle between Raven and Phobia. Phobia partly caused Raven's metamorphosis into Trigon's plaything many issues ago, and it's finally time for a showdown, and a chance for Raven to get even. When two emphatic psychics get together, get ready for a hallucinatory overload!

Godiva returns in issue #44, to make the Titans lives miserable again, while in #45 and #46 we'll see the return of the *Dial H for Hero* kids, to explain just exactly what happened to them. There are three known "H" dials in existence, and they're all in the hands of teenagers. Can they continue to live up to their responsibilities, and what happens when they meet the Titans?

Issue #47 will be guest-drawn by Kelley Jones, and is an "introduction-to-new-readers" type book. Wanting to know more about his playmates, young Danny Chase types up their files on the computer. The origins of the Teen Titans will all be recapped, except one: Donna Troy/Wonder Girl. She seems to be missing an origin, and readers will have to wait until later in the year, in the *New Teen Titans* Graphic Novel, before they can find out just who Donna Troy really is.

Coming late in 1988 will be the *New Teen Titans* Graphic Novel, which will be 94 pages long, and will be released in the same manner as the *Batman: Son of the Demon* graphic novel was. The book will be co-plotted and scripted by Marv Wolfman, and co-plotted, pencilled, inked, and colored by George Perez. No storyline proper has been set, but one thing the story will establish is "who is Donna Troy now?" Wonder Woman will probably guest-star, and most of the Teen Titans, both past and present, will appear. "After this Graphic Novel," says George Perez, "I don't think I will be involved on anything in the *Titans* again. This is my swan song on the book."

Although both *Tales of the Teen Titans* and *Teen Titans Spotlight* have been cancelled, there is a high probability that a spin-off Titans group will be established later this year. Current plans call for an all-male membership, including Cyborg, Thunder & Lightning, Red Star, Changeling, and two other men. The team would be based in San Francisco, and would have their own book. Wolfman dismisses comparisons to *West Coast Avengers*, as the *Teen Titans* had a short-lived contingency called Titans West who were also based in San Francisco, long before Marvel had the germ of an idea for their West Coast team.

Of related interest is a six-issue mini-series featuring the ex-Titans, *Hawk and Dove*. But Dove is dead, you say? Exactly. The new mini-series will appear in fall of 1988. —AM—

NEW TRIUMPH featuring NORTHGUARD

Written and edited by MARK SHAINBLUM. Illustrated by GABRIEL MORRISSETTE

32 black-and-white pages, $1.75, quarterly/monthly from MATRIX GRAPHIC SERIES

As you may have noticed from earlier entries in this *Preview Special*, reports of Matrix's demise have been slightly exaggerated. Although problems have arisen, publisher Mark Shainblum is pleased to announce that the line is back on track.

There have been some major changes made in planning *New Triumph* since the last preview. For the time being, the South African storyline has been dropped, as has the the story dealing with teenage prostitution.

Instead, Shainblum will be concentrating on wrapping up the ManDes storyline. He will be doing this in issue **#6-8**. These issues will effectively comprise a mini-series within the series and will be published monthly.

The major reasons for concentrating on the conclusion of the ManDes storyline are the changes planned for Northguard's future and the possibility of giving him his own (official) title. Plans are to make future adventures a tad less grim. Also, Philip is going to have actually grown as a character: he'll be less wimpy and more competent. He has, after all, had the power bands for some time now.

Beginning in March, with issue **#6**, look for a story called "Earth and Fire." In this issue, Northguard is captured by ManDes and separated from the bands. We find out a good deal more about ManDes's motivations in all their less-than-wonderful glory. There will be some surprises here.

In issue **#7**, ManDes loses patience with the subtle approach and decides that they need to achieve their ends in a more direct manner. In so many words—they attack PACT. Since Philip isn't there to help out as Northguard (see issue **#6**) the major responsibility for defense rests with Manon/Fleur de Lys.

All this leads up to a major blowout in issue **#8**. Creator Shainblum would not divulge any details about this issue except that its title is "Scorched Earth." Then he mumbled something about the title being quite literally true and changed the subject.

Again, Shainblum emphasized that following the "unrelenting grimness of the ManDes story, a definite attempt will be made to give Philip a bit of a break. After all, he's had the worst of baptisms of fire. He deserves some good things in his life."

At press time, it appeared 90% certain that Northguard will get his own book following the ManDes sequence. Should that happen, Shainblum says that *New Triumph* would either become an anthology book or a showcase title.

And since *New Triumph* is Matrix's flagship, this might be a good place to mention that Shainblum is looking at the possibility of doing a series featuring the Steel Chameleon character Matrix licensed from Richard Comely. Also a possibility is a ***Dragon's Star*** prequel, featuring the adventures of Marrik Hawthorne prior to the events in the *Dragon's Star* book. —SW—

NEXUS

Written by MIKE BARON, pencilled by STEVE RUDE and PAUL SMITH, inked by JOHN NYBERG and PAUL SMITH, edited by RICK OLIVER

32 full-color pages, $1.75, monthly from FIRST COMICS

In the first half of 1988, *Nexus* gains momentum towards July's monumental 50th issue, which will be "the greatest comic of all time," according to Mike Baron's reckoning. Printed in the 48-page Prestige (a.k.a. ***Dark Knight***) format, *Nexus* will feature the culmination of every plot line currently running throughout the title.

Following the dream execution story "Portrait of Death" in **#43**, Kreed is forced to make his last stand against the Martians in ***Nexus* #44**. The Martians aren't overly thrilled about the fact that Kreed murdered 3,500 of their people, so they have sworn to bring him back to the planet to face trial. However, Kreed is hardly the type of guy who would want to go along with the Martians peacefully.

Beginning in issue **#45** is what Baron calls "the countdown to Armageddon." The entire solar system is threatened by a black hole that is raging out of control. At the urging of the Web, Nexus and Judah return to the bowl-shaped world to locate a creature who has the power to manipulate black holes. The Badger somehow plays a very important role in this story, which climaxes in **#50**.

Fulfilling Nexus's obligation to punish mass murderers, Baron mentions that "there will be a couple of dream execution issues scattered between **#44-49**, but for the most part we're dealing with the events of the black hole."

Paul Smith will continue to rotate the artistic chores on *Nexus* with Steve Rude (and inker John Nyberg). Their current system of four Rude issues followed by two Smith issues is working well for everyone concerned.

Roger Salick and Mark (*Nightveil*) Heike will make their presence felt in their on-going series of Judah Maccabee back-ups. Everyone's favorite adjudicator will also be featured in a one-shot title which pairs him with Grimjack: ***Judah/Grimjack***, a 48-page Prestige format special, is also written by Salick and will be released later this year.

Another Prestige format crossover, a ***Nexus/Grimjack/Dreadstar*** special written by Baron and illustrated by Brian Murray, will be appearing "way in the future." —MF—

Nexus *a la Paul Smith, from #44.*

NICK FURY VS. S.H.I.E.L.D.

Written by BOB HAUSLAS; pencilled by PAUL NEARY; inked by KIM DeMULDER; edited by MARK GRUENWALD

48 full-color pages, bookshelf format, $3.50; six-issue limited series, monthly from MARVEL COMICS

S.H.I.E.L.D. has been infiltrated, and may be rotten to the core. When S.H.I.E.L.D. Director Nick Fury discovers the corruption, he is forced underground to save his own life. The agents who he has trusted are now hunting him down, and may try to kill him on sight.

Yep, it's finally here.

This deluxe series will excite the most ardent S.H.I.E.L.D. fan, and will have a heavy emphasis on the intricate espionage network set up by the Supreme Headquarters Espionage and Law Enforcement Division.

NICK HAZARD

Adapted from the works of JOHN RUSSELL FEARN by PHIL HARROTTE. Illustrated by RON TURNER; edited by JOHN LAWRENCE

32 black-and-white pages, $1.95, bi-monthly from HARRIER COMICS

Long time pulp novel enthusiast Phil Harbottle is adapting various stories by John Russell Fearn using his own

Nick Hazard—sounds like a Firesign Theatre routine, doesn't it?

character Nick Hazard to give the series some continuity.

Hazard is a special agent from Earth Control in 2187, by which time humanity has populated vast expanses of the galaxy, and in the first issue he must contend with an insectoid race from even further in the future who need humans to stock up their larder. That's adapted from the Fearn story *Lords of 9016*, and the second issue will be based on *A Time Appointed*, in which Hazard must deal with the dreadful legacy of a long extinct race.

Artist Ron Turner has been known for his spectacular artwork in Britain for the past three decades, and has a long association with Fearn, having provided covers for the original printings of many of his stories. Turner will be painting full color covers for this series. —FPi—

night life

Written by DEREK McCULLOCH; illustrated by SIMON TAISTAM; edited by MORGAN MUNRO

32 black-and-white pages, $1.70; irregularly from STRAWBERRY JAM

Hit harder than many by the recent bankruptcies of several distributors, Strawberry Jam finds itself able to publish fewer issues than expected. McCulloch remains hopeful that most of the Dashiell Hammettesque "Opal" tetralogy will appear. "We'll probably be more regular than Continuity was a couple of years ago," laughs McCulloch.

Alexandra, the woman who bought the jewel in the back-up of issue #5 with the bulk of her money, finds a job bartending at Crofts, the bar that is a watering hole for most of the book's cast. By story's end she finds that the opal has been stolen from her. In the next issue she hires Wheeler and Frye, the private investigators also last seen in ***night life*** **#5**, to find it. It is a search taken up by the Dog Queen and several others, all for their own reasons. The petty thief who stole it is soon discovered, and the saga ends with a facedown in a parking garage. —EV—

NIGHTBIRD

Written and edited by MARTIN LOCK; illustrated by CAM SMITH

4-issue mini-series; 24 black-and-white pages; $1.95; bi-monthly from HARRIER COMICS

Martin Lock writes, "Coral Mustin breaks out of the local jail and takes back her impounded spaceship, the *Nightbird*, with the aid of a selection of female friends. And off they go into adventure, starting with their slightly unwilling induction into a live-ammo game show." I think that says it all, really. —FPi—

NIGHTSTREETS

Written and illustrated by MARK BLOODWORTH; edited by STUART KERR

32 black-and-white pages; $1.50; quarterly/bi-monthly from ARROW COMICS

This preview is almost the same as the one in the previous *AH Preview Special*. *Nightstreets* went on hiatus while writer/artist Mark Bloodworth moved into a new home. Issue #5 was the only issue to appear during the last half of 1987, so most of the story development planned for that period will appear during the first half of 1988 instead.

It is now definite that the "Mob Rules" story will end in issue #6, out around March. Bloodworth is confident that he will be able to produce *Nightstreets* on a monthly schedule starting with #7. The comic has a large enough readership to support this frequency.

The "Mob Rules" denouement will be predictably grim. Bloodworth says that all of *Nightstreets*'s main cast will survive, but not all of the supporting characters will. Read #6 to find out which characters are "main cast" and which are "supporting."

The preview in *AH Preview Special #5* is still good for issue #7 on. After the "Mob Rules" story ends, a new character is introduced. "Emanon is unusual in both actions and appearance," says Stuart Kerr. "He's wealthy, flamboyant and eccentric, and considers himself above such petty ideals as good or evil." Emanon is from New York City and he wants to open a franchise of his "Chequered Repast" night club; he also wants to put city officials under his thumb, thus providing trouble for the Black Dahlia, the police and Felonious Katt. Another female vigilante debuts in issue #9 and #10. "Blonde Venus" is the incarnation of a 1930s heroine, and after a rocky start, she and the Black Dahlia team up.

Bloodworth adds that one of the subplots will be the beginning of a rift between the Dahlia and Mal Brayton. This will have the side effect of placing unexpected pressure on the Dahlia's personal life, since it will leave her temporarily without a close friend who can baby-sit her young daughter, Blossom, while she's out being a costumed hero. Also, Bloodworth will continue his practice of revealing small fragments of background data about each of his main characters in every issue, instead of writing a lengthy origin story on each character as some readers have requested. —FPi—

NIGHTWOLF

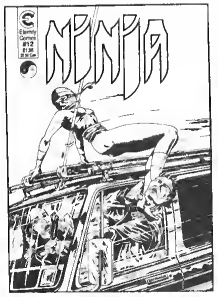
Written and illustrated by PETER KRAUSE; edited by ALAN PAYNE

24 black-and-white pages; $1.50; bi-monthly from ENTROPY ENTERPRISES (Mature Readers)

In the next six months, Paul Hund (Nightwolf) continues along in his rocky mission to become a super-hero. In issue #4, Paul begins to train in order to enhance his physical skills. With issue #5, mobster Duke Sutton initiates a gang war against the Nightwolf. There will also be return appearances of both the "King" of spades, and the crazed Captain Anarchy. In the next year Nightwolf will travel to England and encounter a shadowy creature of the night.

"Ultimately what we are trying to achieve with this book is a dark chiaroscuro effect, along with solid characterizations—and a bit of humor. If we could carry on along the lines of, say, Evanier's and Spiegle's *Crossfire* (which I see, unfortunately, is being discontinued), we would be happy."

NINJA



How many books this year have stories that take place in Nicaragua?

Written by C.J. HENDERSON; pencilled by KEVIN FARRELL; inked by M.M. RITTER

32 black-and-white pages; $1.95; monthly from ETERNITY COMICS

The Red Dog Tactical Squadron (also known as "The Suiciders") is a covert branch of the United States Army. "They are answerable only to very few members of the military," said writer C.J. Henderson. "And the Executive Branch of the government." Headed by Major F. Paul Sanders, Red Dog is one of the few "untouchable" enforcement squads currently at work.

"They are sent in only when all other forms of negotiation and non-active resistance to a situation have been exhausted," Henderson said. In upcoming issues, the Red Dog team, with the aid of several mercenaries (including two members of the pre-holocaust *New Humans*), attack a Russian base in Nicaragua they stumbled across in issue #10. This story is designed to question the idea of military initiative. "It's also," says scripter C.J. Henderson, "designed to give the fans a blast of all-out action!" As always, all-out action in *Ninja* means people will be dying—good guys and bad guys alike.

Future issues will pit Kate Monroe (code name: Ninja) and the team against terrorists at home and abroad. The Red Dog team is able to protect the Washington Monument, but will the people of the city be so lucky? Also, Henderson promises to reveal more about the mysterious KGB hit men, Kate's love life, and what that sinister Soviet mastermind Garkov is up to.

M.M. Ritter has joined the *Ninja* creative team with issue #7 as regular inker, and penciller Kevin Farrell has increased his workload by signing on as penciller of another Henderson project, *Yakuza*. Eternity Comics will also be releasing the *Ninja* graphic novel which will reprint the first six issues of the comic (the complete "Dirty Game" storyline), with an introduction by *Scout*'s Timothy Truman.

NINJA ELITE

Written by MARK ELLIS; illustrated by GABRIEL MORRISSETTE

32 black-and-white pages; $1.95; bi-monthly from ADVENTURE PUBLICATIONS

Ninja Elite is a story thick with "prodigious greed, tangled intrigue, and fierce rivalries." It tells the story of a group of elite guards in the world of Anoria who are philosophically parallel to but entirely separate from the Japanese ninja. The story follows the character Nightwind (of *Adventurers*) before the events in *Adventurers Book I*. In the city-state of Pandona, aristocratic houses from fight for power and influence. The Ninja Elite are the chosen elite guards of House Dracus. Trained in the arts of the ninja, their skills are used to defend their lords, assassinate rivals, and spy on other houses.

Delia was rescued from a beating as a young girl by a stranger, Master Sun, whom she followed to the House Dracus. There it was revealed that she would fulfill a prophecy and become his next pupil. After ten years of rigorous mental and physical conditioning, Delia became Nightwind, the newest member of the Amita K'un.

According to writer Mark Ellis, "Nightwind is changing. She is accepting her role as a tool, a weapon, but at the same time some duality, even schizophrenia will come out," he said. "She's obedient, but when she battles, rage lashes out that comes from surrendering her will."

The story in issue #4 ties in the story directly with ***Adventurers Book I***. A deal for exclusive trade rights through the city of Liam is struck between House Dracus and Tarrus One-Eyed, the mad and powerful sorcerer of Liam. The deal hinges upon the delivery of the Amita K'un of the first day of Telku. As rival House Eichon learns of the deal, the situation in Pandona becomes explosive!

In issue #5, Nightwind and the other Amita K'un attempt to enter the heavily guarded temple of Baal in search of the Key. The Key of Telku is one of the five keys Tarrus seeks that would unlock the Gates of Chaos and unleash unlimited power!

"***Ninja Elite*** has touches of sword-and-sorcery, but with a more philosophical slant," Ellis said. "There's not so much hack and slash."

NINJA HIGH SCHOOL

Written by JAMES HANRAHAN; illustrated and edited by BEN DUNN

32 black-and-white pages; $1.50; bi-monthly from ANTARCTIC PRESS

This was originally intended as only a three-issue mini-series. But when it turned out to be the most popular title they'd ever published—well, Antarctic Press isn't slow at figuring out what the readers want more of. Beginning with #4

From Ninja High School: Going Japanese

Again from Ninja High School

in December 1987, ***Ninja High School*** is a regular bi-monthly title.

Ninja High School is a smooth blend of such Japanese high-school fantasy-comedies as *Those Obnoxious Aliens* (now appearing at Eclipse as ***Lum***) and *Just What You'd Expect From the Saruobi Family*, and the American *Archie* comics with an emphasis on *Sabrina, the Teen-Age Witch*. The first three issues were dominated by the opening serial in which the two teen girl rivals, Itchy Koo (Ichi Kun, leader of a Japanese ninja clan) and Princess Astrial (an alien disguised as a human), came to a typical American high school to battle for the hand of a bewildered student, Jeremy Feeple. Several other characters among the students and faculty were introduced.

The new, regular comic book will tend towards separate stories which follow the different characters of Quagmire High. The school will add a time-traveling history teacher, Mita Celende, to its staff. Jeremy Feeple will spend a semester as an exchange student in Japan, where he will meet more teen-age ninjas. Readers will learn how both Itchy Koo and Astrial adapt to life as American co-eds. There will be a glimpse of Astrial's former, alien boyfriend before she becomes a human. Arnie, Quagmire High's leading jock, will get roped into an adventure reminiscent of *The Most Dangerous Game* crossed with *The Terminator*. Quagmire High's cross-town rivals at Flugerville High will be introduced. Teen-age witches and demons! An army of Napoleonic rats from another dimension! Wild and crazy stuff just like you like it! —FPn—

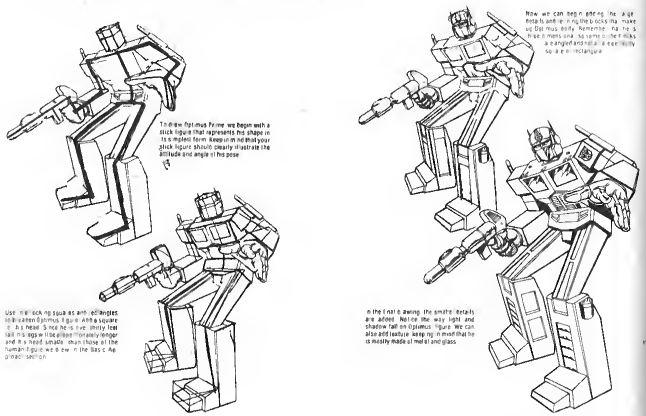
THE OFFICIAL HOW TO DRAW ROBOTECH

Written and illustrated by ROBERT MILLER; edited by JOHN STEPHENSON

32 black-and-white pages, $2.00; monthly from BLACKTHORNE PUBLISHING

How would you like to be able to quit school and draw comic books professionally? This series could help you become the artist you've dreamed of. Each issue will teach you how to draw one main character, and different secondary characters of the legendary *Macross Saga*. Weapons, aliens, and high-tech mechs will also be at your creative beck and call. —MSM—

You too can make dozens of dollars drawing Robotech!



THE OFFICIAL HANDBOOK OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE UPDATE '88

Written by PETER SANDERSON; illustrated by VARIOUS; edited by HOWARD MACKIE

6-issue limited series; 48 four-color pages; $1.25; newsstand distribution; monthly from MARVEL COMICS GROUP

Having finally finished the Book of the Dead, Marvel Universe cataloguers Peter Sanderson and Howard Mackie are now hard at work on the first official Update series, covering specifically new characters or old ones that were either overlooked the first time (such as the Avengers' butler, Jarvis) or who have had "major" changes occur in their lives since last year. The Update series, which is currently scheduled to begin in either April or May, will run for six issues and be followed by the long-promised Appendix series, or "The Book of Names" as Gruenwald calls it.

A special highlight of the Update series is that all-new art has been commissioned, not only for the main illustrations, but also for all the action shots, bowing to reader requests to eliminated the reprinted artwork seen in previous editions. Gruenwald stresses that the same artist will be doing all the illustrations for a given entry; for example, if John Byrne does an entry for the Human Torch, he will provide all of the artwork for the Torch entry, as opposed to a mixture of artists depicting the Torch. If this experiment works to both the readers' and Marvel's satisfaction, it will become a staple of future *Handbook* editions. —DP—

OFFICIAL MARVEL INDEXES

Written by GEORGE OLSHEVSKY; edited by CRAIG ANDERSON

48 four-color pages; $2.95; bi-monthly from MARVEL COMICS GROUP

During the first half of 1988, Marvel will be releasing ***#6-8*** of both ***The X-Men Indexes*** and ***The Avengers Indexes***. Lots more plot synopses, credits, and cover reproductions from both of these titles in their mid-100s period — and Valentino will be drawing two covers for the series. —JC—

OMAHA THE CAT DANCER

Written by KATE WORLEY; illustrated by REED WALLER

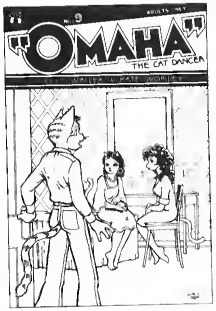
32 black-and-white pages; $2.00; bi-monthly from KITCHEN SINK PRESS (Adults Only)

Recent delays of issues of Kitchen Sink's most popular title have been due to a health problem of creator Reed Waller's ***Omaha #8***, which should have been out in October, is now set for December publication. Issue ***#9*** will follow in February.

Previewing ***Omaha*** is difficult, according to publisher Denis Kitchen, because Waller and writer Kate Worley "don't work that far ahead. They seem to enjoy letting the characters lead them, rather than having a master plan." Worley says she always has a vague idea of where the series is headed, but the characters take on lives of their own and determine the directions of the stories, often at odds with her own plans for the book.

In the next few issues, Chuck and Omaha are trying to establish a more normal and domestic pattern of living, but they encounter problems and conflicts. They've gotten an apartment together and Chuck is about to get a large inheritance from his father's death. But lurking in the background is Chuck's mother, who arrives on the scene in ***#9*** (she's on the cover). "Storm clouds threaten," says Worley.

The Collected Omaha will be out before Christmas, collecting ***Omaha #1*** and ***#2*** and all of the scattered stories that appeared before Omaha got her own title. That includes stories from such various places as ***Snarf #10***, ***Dope #5*** and ***Bizarre Sex #5***. An added bonus is a



Omaha: Late but still coming.

five-page story preceding (in terms of the storyline) any of the published stories, telling the story of Omaha as the Pet centerfold, the event upon which her fame is based. The real bonus, though, is a fold-out of the actual centerfold!

Waller has written an introduction to the book and the covers are newly created. The softcover edition, selling for $12.95, is due out in early December. A $25.00 signed limited-edition hardcover should be out by Christmas. —BE—

OPEN SEASON

Written and drawn by JIM BRICKER

24 black-and-white pages; $2.00; bi-monthly from RENEGADE PRESS

Issue ***#5*** will feature the reluctant roommates all moved into their new place (since they got kicked out of their old apartment last issue) and trying to figure out why they're still together since they have nothing in common and apparently hate each other's guts. Cliff offers some nice summations at the end of the issue.

In issue ***#6***, according to Bricker, all the characters "are going to lunch with their respective partners," which will "lay the groundwork for the storyline that will climax in issue ***#9***." Robin will have another run-in with her old boyfriend who was married. Joe has a confrontation with April, and Cliff has to get married or lose one million dollars.

Bricker said that ***Open Season*** will continue in the current comic book format at least until issue ***#9***, however, that issue just might be a 32-page book. —CB—

OUT THE NEXT

Written, illustrated and edited by STEVE BEAUPRE

24 black-and-white pages; $1.75; semi-annually from CASHHEAD COMICS

Due in late Spring, ***Out the Next*** will feature photography, text and art, primarily by Steve Beaupre. Publisher Steve Lafler has given him a free hand to print what he sees fit. "He's been soliciting contributions for it. I assume it's going to have cartoons and whatnot by other people, but right now I couldn't tell what for sure."

Lafler has contributed the cover, a night scene of a diner with a sign using a flag motif picked out in differently colored light bulbs, "The tentative theme is 'Night of the Electric Flag.'" In keeping with the cover, it is expected that much of the humor will focus on tacky Americana. —EV—

OUTCASTS

Written by JOHN WAGNER and ALAN GRANT; penciled by CAM KENNEDY; inked by STEVE MONTIANO; edited by MIKE CARLIN

12-issue maxi-series; 32 black-and-white pages; $1.75; monthly from DC COMICS INC.

So what's the most frequently disap-

If you thought Dog Boy was weird

Outlander: "Disarm me," indeed...

pointing cover copy in super-hero comics, then? I don't know, but The Strangest Hero of All" must rank high on the list. ***Outcasts #8*** will feature the strangest hero of all. You don't believe me, do you? Well, when was the last time that you saw a hero who was carried around in a bucket, then?

During a period of upheaval in the final issues of the series, Yancy Queeg is the unfortunate character to receive that dubious honor. He's transformed from his present state when Caine finally grants his request and attempts to relieve him of his immortality by aging him a thousand years. His flesh crumbles into a pile of dust, but when Rickenbacker is going to discard the skull it's discovered that Queeg's essence still resides there. This follows issues **#6** and **#7**, where events have left both Caine and Shock severely incapacitated and Rickenbacker as the only mobile Outcast.

Rickenbacker wants to maintain the team's ideal and thrust, and he knows from his days as a slaughterbowl star that when the first team is out of action it's time to call up the reserves, so he recruits two of his fellow slaughterbowl cronies Killer Kowalski and the Professor, who has to be rescued from a mental asylum where he's waiting for the sentence of euthanasia to be carried out. With Queeg in a bucket, that makes for a complete team again, and Rickenbacker decides to follow his original suggestions of kidnapping Boss Angel and beating him until he sees things Rickenbacker's way, and elects to do so as Boss Angel is delivering a speech commemorating the millionth death at Suicide Park, a sort of Disneyland where all the rides end in death. There's the Tunnel of Doom, and a helter skelter ending in a series of sawblades, which is where Boss Angel appears to be heading at the end of issue **#9**.

The Satan Brothers will return complete with a robot dog (named Spot) to track the Outcasts down, and further complications ensue when a mystery villain begins killing Corporation presidents and signing the name of the Outcasts in their blood. Boss Angel's personal advisor, Orcom, an organic computer fed with the liquefied brains of the recently deceased, will also play an increasingly large part in the final issues.

It's obvious from the above that the black humor endemic to the series continues, and Alan Grant (not pleased with the first three issues in retrospect, feeling they would have been better condensed into flashbacks during the course of the series) considers that the story improves each issue. He says that by the end of the series Big City will have assumed an identity of its own rather in the manner of Mega-City One in ***Judge Dredd***, and promises that few of the characters will remain the same, or indeed remain at all by the final issue.

—FPH—

OUTLANDER

Written by SCOTT FINLEY; illustrated by BROOKS HAGAN; edited by LINC HIATT

32 black-and-white pages, $1.95; monthly from ETERNITY COMICS (Mature Readers)

During the next few episodes of ***Outlander***, ex-sociologist, ex-Institute "prompter" Adam Gallow continues to flee the clutches of the I.C.E. (Institute for the Control of societal Endangerment).

Busy trying to stay alive, he is even more desperate to keep the powerful empathic force of the remarkable Cassandra from the Institute's control. But first, he's got to find her.

"Along the way," said writer Scott Finley, "he encounters women with Napoleon complexes, gangs of brain-washed pre-adolescents, little men possessing big syringes filled with fear, a corporation whose main occupation is the manufacture of soap containing human tallow, a machine that removes souls, and a particularly nasty motorcyclist who takes women for rides they never get to complete."

Little by little, Gallow uncovers the Institute's master plan: to gain absolute power by weakening the very fabric of society ... and plunging Western Civilization into a new Dark Age.

PARIS MAN OF PLASTER

Written by STEVE WAY and GLENN DAKIN; drawn by GLENN DAKIN; edited by MARTIN LOCK

24 black-and-white pages, $1.95; bi-monthly from HARRIER COMICS

"I'm aiming to cultivate a friendly atmosphere for *Paris*," says Glenn Dakin, "to contrast the heavy attitude prevalent in so many other titles." Ways in which this manifests itself are the encouraging of trivial letters rather than dissection of the strips in the previous issue, and the two page "Pals of Paris" feature in which readers are asked to submit ideas for super-heroes "who're not too meaningful."

Paris himself will be dealing with the most dangerous book in the world in issue **#5**, described by Dakin as "a surreal fantasy," and in the succeeding issue you, the readers, are asked to deduce the culprit behind a series of robberies before Paris does. The clues and the suspects will all be there for you.

The one-page *Temptation* strips will continue, and there will be a new back-up strip from ***Paris #5***, ***Introspectre***. Described by Dakin as "mystery and adventure with a few gags chucked in" Introspectre is a man who's slightly more than a medium, acting as a conduit between the spirit world and the living. Spirits can possess him, which is a dangerous occupation since the possession is at random, and the spirits in possession may not necessarily have the same intentions as those who summoned them. Set in the Fenlands of East Anglia, Dakin hopes to infuse *Introspectre* with the same bleak and gloomy quality of the landscape.

—FPH—

PATRICK RABBIT

Written, drawn and edited by PHIL YEH

32 black-and-white pages, $2.00; occasionally from FRAGMENTS WEST

Patrick Rabbit is the Rambo of literacy—a cottontail with a cause. Patrick's origin actually appears in ***Usagi Yojimbo #7***, and continues in ***Frank the Unicorn #5*** before this readin', ritin', and 'rithmetic type rabbit debuts in his own book this summer, written and drawn by that inimitable crusader for literacy, Phil Yeh.

As the origin explains, Patrick was once a mere origami rabbit, owned by a little boy named Marco, who came to life only to get into trouble with the law (stealing a bunch of carrots, no less). While in jail, Patrick begins studying, and turns over a new hutch, so to speak.

Still, sometimes his temper gets the best of him—Patrick tends to get infuriated by people who won't think and don't even want to try, so he continues to get into various madcap scrapes, including a run in with Sumo Cat, who is just what he sounds like—a wrestling feline.

The back-up strip is *Renegade Ronin of the Rocketeers*, by Ace MacDonald and an artist to be named later, a light-hearted adventure strip featuring one man's quest for meaning in a world without pity.

—HMacD—

PENGUIN AND PENCILGUIN

Written, drawn and edited by PHIL YEH

32 black-and-white pages, $2.00; bi-monthly from FRAGMENTS WEST

Here's a little-known fact: ***Penguin & Pencilguin*** is one of the best-selling black-and-white comics in the nation. Issue **#2**, a tie-in with the Constitution's 200th anniversary, sold 90,000 copies. It's true! How does Phil Yeh do it? By selling his book outside of comic shops, to schools, libraries and corporations. (Many talk about expanding the market for comics, but Yeh feels he's doing his part.) And telling silly stories about penguins and ice cream and getting in a word or two for reading along the way.

Penguin & Pencilguin **#4** features a guest shot by Alfredo Alcala while telling the story of Don Guinoxte, the Penguin de la Mocha, by Miguin Cervantes. And if you want to use the rapidly spinning (but grave-bound) Miguel Cervantes to do that rototilling job you've been putting off, you're gonna have to stand in line. Jean "Moebius" Giraud is scheduled to put in a cameo appearance in a future issue, as well.

Bill Dinardo's whimsical "Friends" continues as the back-up strip. Though the regular series from Renegade has been cancelled, Dinardo still plans on finishing up the story of Bialos and the mystery of Miles and the Pags some place and some time.

—HMacD—

THE PHANTOM

Written by PETER DAVID; pencilled by JOE ORLANDO; inked by DENNIS JANKE; edited by MIKE GOLD and BOB GREENBERGER

4-issue mini-series, 32 four-color pages, 75 cents; newsstand distribution; monthly from DC COMICS INC.

Debuting in his King Feature Syndicate newspaper strip on February 17, 1936, the Phantom is acknowledged as comicdom's "first *successful* costumed hero," according to co-editor Mike Gold. Partially inspired by the 50th anniversary of Superman, DC Comics is saluting the Man of Steel's heroic predecessors in a variety of series: ***The Shadow, Doc Savage, Flash Gordon,*** and ***The Phantom***.

Created by Lee Falk, ***The Phantom*** still appears in newspaper syndication today. For their four-issue mini-series, DC is working under the supervison of Falk, who has final approval over the comic's material.

For those unfamiliar with the history of this comics legend, the Phantom's career began some four hundred years ago when a young man was washed ashore onto a jungle habitat. Pirates had attacked the ship he was on, murdering his parents. Soon afterwards, the young man discovered the body of the cutthroat who killed his parents, and made a solemn vow upon the pirate's skull: "I swear to devote my life to the destruction of piracy, greed, cruelty, and injustice,

*The cover to the **Phantom #2**, by Joe Orlando and Dave Gibbons. Who knows the name of the horse?*

and my sons and their sons shall follow me." Thus was born the Phantom, and his offspring carried on his heroic tradition for centuries.

DC's ***Phantom*** series is a parallel story, linking the affairs of the contemporary 21st Phantom with those of the 13th Phantom, who lived some 700 years in the past. Mike Gold elaborates by explaining that "the 21st Phantom is dealing with the descendants of the 13th Phantom. The 13th Phantom fought a pirate named Chessman, while the 21st fights a *corporate* pirate named Chessman."

Both storylines involve a jungle setting, and the 13th Phantom's segments are also set on the pirate-ridden high seas. The 21st Phantom gets to utilize his jungle skills in a concrete jungle, as his quest carries him into Manhattan.

Joe Orlando, who drew the "Black Freighter" scenes in last year's successful ***Watchmen*** series, is the artist for ***The Phantom***, another series brimming with piracy. In a subtle tip of the hat to ***Watchmen,*** Dave Gibbons is inking Orlando's pencils on the covers of ***The Phantom***.

Gold also assures readers that this mini-series will include many elements borrowed from the Phantom's lore. The comic will be published under a classic logo once used in the King Features strip.

"While we're dealing with the classic elements of the Phantom,' says co-editor Bob Greenberger, "we're also showing that he's a bit of a fish out of water when he's not in Africa. It is really interesting to see how he handles the New York police department, and works in the Manhattan jungle, rather than the African jungle."

The Phantom #1 hits the stands in February. —ME—

THE PHOENIX RESTAURANT

Written, drawn and edited by FERRET

one-shot, 48 black-and-white pages, $3.50, from FANDOM HOUSE

"We hope ***The Phoenix Restaurant*** will come to be known as another snotty, inaccessible, over-priced graphic album, just like ***Faith of the Foe***," said Dennis Pimple in an attempt to outrage and disenfranchise the general comic-reading public.

The album features the work of Ferret, well-known sf illustrator and associate of Matt Howarth. An earlier publication featuring the Neo-Canton Guy, ***Neo-Canton Legacy***, was published by Howarth's Howski Studios in 1985. ***Phoenix Restaurant*** is a black-humor journey though the kitchens and back alleys of the Neo-Canton World. Or something like that.

Production values will be high, as will the cover price. "This isn't going to be something every comic reader will want to read," said Pimple in his snottiest tone of voice. "Just something every comic reader ***should*** read."

The book will ship in April, 1988, according to current plans.

Another snotty inaccessible over-priced graphic album.

PIRATE CORP$

Written and drawn by EVAN DORKIN

32 four-color pages, $1.95, monthly from ETERNITY COMICS

While not planned as such, each issue of ***Pirate Corp$*** has taken a potshot at a social or cultural phenomenon of today. Issue #3 was the "dance" issue, focusing on the punk/ska music club scene, and #4 involved itself with futuristic looks at nuclear war and racism.

Pirate Corp$ #5 is lighthearted in tone to offset the attempted suicide of Harlie in #3. The crew of the *New Jersey Devil* is still stuck on the planet Calico after the worldwide party: their docking fees were misplaced and they don't have the moeny to get the Devil out of port. To help out while Captain Ronald Chitin looks for smuggling work, Mr. Blue and Halby take jobs at McDonald's. All hell—as usual—breaks loose and a food-fight/riot breaks out because of his pair of rubes. This issue is aptly titled "Minimum Rage."

Issue #6 continues the hell that is life in the year 2674 by exploring professional sports: specifically ice hockey. Captain Chitin is invited to play in an all-star veteran's league as a goalie. The game of ice hockey has undergone a few changes in 700 years: the huge playing surface features ramps and slides, two pucks fired from high-velocity cannon, and more players on the field. If this weren't enough, Zygo Lukewarm, Vroom Socko, and the Screaming Retina Gang show up during halftime in the issue that could only be called "Hit the Ice."

The cover to Pirate Corp$ #6.

"As I promised in the letters page of issue #1, ***Pirate Corp$*** is going to veer off in many directions while remaining fixed on its characters," creator Evan Dorkin explains. "As wild as I want 2674 to be, I want the characters to be interesting and identifiable among their hectic surroundings." Dorkin stressed that the main idea behind ***Pirate Corp$*** is that no matter the technological advances and discoveries of interplanetary life and travel, life still sucks. "The only way to deal with it is to have a breakdown and a drink . . ."

PLASTIC MAN

Scripted by PHIL FOGLIO; designed by DOUG RICE; illustrated by HILARY BARTA; edited by MIKE GOLD

4-issue mini-series, 32 four-color pages, 75 cents; newsstand distribution; monthly from DC COMICS INC.

DC is preparing to undertake what is perhaps the company's greatest challenge to date: making Plastic Man a working concept in contemporary comics.

Jack Cole, who created the pliable hero in 1941's ***Police Comics*** #1, is respected as being one of the most imaginative geniuses in the history of comics. His stories balanced straightforward action with subtle—and frequently not-so-subtle—humor. His art was sometimes realistic, sometimes surrealistic, sometimes patently absurd. Cole's inimitable legacy has caused his successors on ***Plastic Man*** a wealth of grief.

In the mid-'60s, writer Arnold Drake and artists Gil Kane and Win Mortimer failed in their attempt to revive ***Plastic Man***, as their version bounced off the newsstands after ten issues that most fans would rather forget. Writers Steve Skeates and John Albano teamed with illustrator Ramona Fradon in the mid-'70s for another Plas revival. While their efforts were admirable, something just didn't click, and the book was cancelled after a year and a half. Finally, Plastic Man got another chance to stretch his sales potential in the late '70s/early '80s as a feature in ***Adventure Comics***. This Martin Pasko/Joe Staton collaboration was by far the best of DC's attempts to do the character, but it still proved short-lived.

Editor Mike Gold believes that "the difficulty with reviving ***Plastic Man*** in the past has been reconciling the Jack Cole approach to whatever was contemporary at the time." He also feels confident that the collaborative team of Phil Foglio, Doug Rice and Hilary Barta has stumbled onto a formula that will reintroduce Plas as a viable 1980s superhero, while maintaining that special Jack Cole influence.

Phil Foglio explains his concept behind revamping the character by reminding us of the hero's origin, where the wounded gangster Eel O'Brien is doused with acid during a hold-up attempt. Just as in the original story, the acid interacts with Eel's bloodstream, giving him the ability to stretch. But in DC's new version, "the acid has affected his perception. It's almost like he's on drugs 100% of the time!"

Because of the effect of the acid on O'Brien's mind, "the way he sees the world is the way Jack Cole drew it," says Foglio.

The four-issue mini-series will generally be illustrated in a typical DC superhero style, but occasionally supplemented with scenes from Plastic Man's "Cole-ish" point of view. "Plas feels that he's living in that Jack Cole world," adds Mike Gold, "but what he sees and what is actually going on are two different things."

Issue #1 chronicles the character's origin, introduces his portly sidekick Woozy Winks, and covers Eel O'Brien's decision to forsake his life of crime for super-heroics. Issue #2 features the slimy Ooze Brothers, who, according to Foglio, are "even more plastic than Plastic Man. ***He*** stretches, but ***they*** slosh!" The third issue spotlights Woozy, as his attempt to strike out on his own entangles him into a bizarre religious cult. ***Plastic Man*** #4 is the weirdest issue of the mini-series, involving outer space aliens, robots, and a secret U.S. government plot, all related to the disappearance of homeless people from New York City.

Although Plas is engrained into the DC universe, the mini-series will not feature any guest-stars . . . but don't be surprised if you see references to other characters. ***Plastic Man*** #1 will debut this Spring. —ME—

POPEYE

Written and illustrated by VARIOUS; edited by BOB PALIN and BILL PEARSON

32 four-color pages, $1.75, from OCEAN COMICS

Editor Bob Palin was uncertain about Popeye's future in comics form, but has plans that are likely to result in two books about the crusty sailor. He revealed that fan reaction and initial sales were good, but cites low reorders and the need to negotiate with King Features as possible stumbling blocks. Therefore, none of the following should be taken as gospel truth.

Most likely to appear is another special, with much the same creative team: Ron Fortier writing, Ben Dunn pencilling, and Bill Pearson doing everything else. It would, like the first special, be in color. This will either lead into a regular series, be another one-shot to test the waters, or may not appear at all as a special, but rather be the first issue of a series (he'ssee, did I cover all the bases?)

Also possible is ***Popeye Jam***, which Palin hopes to make a vehicle for unlikely creator teamups, similar to ***Cerebus Jam***. If it appears, look for it to be in black-and-white, probably at a cheaper price than the specials. —EV—

POWER COMICS

Written by DON AVENALL and NORMAN WALKER; illustrated by DAVE GIBBONS and BRIAN BOLLAND; edited by BAMBOS GEORGIOU

4-issue mini-series, 32 black-and-white pages, $2.00, bi-monthly from ACME PRESS

Back in the mid-1970s two young British artists, Brian Bolland and Dave Gibbons,

Before Watchmen, before Judge Dredd, there was Power Man!

were starting their careers by drawing the adventures of an invincible black superhero whose strip was published in Nigeria. Since then, the boys have done rather well for themselves, while the public at large seems to have forgotten all about this Power Man. Well, Acme aims to put that right during 1988.

Although mostly invincible (see below) Power Man can be resuscitated by bolts of lightning or jolts of electricity on the odd occasion that he is poorly. One of the more imaginative methods of doing so was to throw him into a shower, turn it on and throw an electric fire in after him. Just be sure you don't try that at home, children, even if the cord does reach.

Serving as a mixture of entertainment and educational propaganda, Power Man has a natural aversion to snakes, probably quite sound if you're living in Nigeria, and otherwise he's likely to succumb only to Marvel Comics lawyers. That's why Acme are playing safe by altering the title of the feature. —FPI—

POWER FACTOR

Written by KEVIN JUAIRE; pencilled by CARMINE INFANTINO; inked by DOUG HAZLEWOOD; edited by DAVID CAMPITI

32 full-color pages, $1.95, bi-monthly from PIED PIPER PRESS

Power Factor is set in a world where organized crime got smart. Putting aside their own squabbles, the crime lords got together and set out to systematically destroy their costumed foes. They succeeded.

Either the heroes were killed or coerced into retirement. This left the mob in control. They held power over the people and finances that allow the world to function.

Then Josh Kennedy appeared. Kennedy had a gift: the ability to find people blessed with uncanny, or extra abilities. He searched out and trained a group of these new "heroes" in an

attempt to replace those slain or under the power of the mob.

Power Factor was the most popular book put out by Pied Piper before their legal hassles and distribution problems.

Issue #2 which should have finally reached the stores by the time you read this, has these new heroes travelling to the West Coast to take on West Coast criminals. Entitled "Back in Black," the story deals with the twofold purpose of the heroes' California trip: to throw the mob off-balance, and to wrest control of more of the mob's trophy case of super-hero costumes. Also, we see the public's first reaction to these new heroes.

Issue #3, "Thick as a Brick," re-orients the group as they begin a second set of tactics against the mob and assemble more individuals for their cause.

"Who Runs this Town Anyway?" is the title of issue #4, wherein a long comatose hero is returned to life and manipulated by the mob in order to trash the Power Factor. —SW—

POWER GIRL

Written by PAUL KUPPERBERG; pencilled by RICK HOBERG; inked by ARNE STARR; edited by BOB GREENBERGER

4-issue limited series. 32 four-color pages. $1.00; newsstand distribution; monthly from DC COMICS INC.

After her introduction in *All-Star Comics* 12 years ago, Power Girl has proven to be one of the most popular characters without her own title. DC is rectifying the matter with her first mini-series, re-establishing her in post-Crisis continuity.

"People used to think of Power Girl and remember her—uh—*zaftig* physique as designed by Wally Wood and then-editor Gerry Conway," editor Bob Greenberger notes. "However, she also had a real tough-edge, no-nonsense personality that clicked with the readers."

Power Girl has floated from series to series and never found a home or reason for being. This was all complicated when her reality was destroyed as a result of the Crisis on Infinite Earths. Since then, she had a revised origin that didn't meet with 100% fan approval and was a supporting character in *Warlord*, of all places, until now.

"There's been a brewing struggle between the lords of Order and Chaos since the *Dr. Fate* mini-series," Greenberger adds. "Now the battle is being carried from the mystical realm to the super-hero world via this mini-series. Power Girl's grandfather, Arion, had many enemies including one called The Weaver. He is now acting as an agent of Chaos and is also seeking revenge against Arion's heir."

The storyline will introduce two new super-villains and an unusual supporting character—Mongo Krebs. Krebs, an ex-Army man, will teach Power Girl about her spiritual side from which she derives her powers. Adding to this, the Phantom Stranger is also scheduled to make a guest appearance.

Writer Paul Kupperberg will be giving Power Girl a new setting—Brooklyn—and a new set of supporting characters. "Paul's trying to establish Power Girl as a young, upwardly-mobile professional—she has her own business, is worried about her building going co-op, and isn't hung up on her secret identity," Greenberger says.

Rick Hoberg, best known for his work on *Eternity Smith*, will be illustrating his first assignment for DC since *DC Challenge* #8 and Arne Starr graduates from co-inking several features to solo-ing. The covers for all four issues will be by Kerry Gammill and Dick Giordano, and the first issue goes on sale in February. —LLS—

Power Girl cover by Kerry Gammill.

POWER LINE

Written by DANIEL CHICHESTER and MARGARET CLARK; pencilled by DAVID ROSS; inked by BOB McLEOD; edited by STEVE BUCELLATO

32 four-color pages. $1.25; bi-monthly from MARVEL EPIC COMICS

Power Line will be the second of Epic's interrelated "Shadow Line Saga" books to find its way to comics shop racks, in March, a month after *Doctor Zero*. The third connected series, *St. George*, will appear the following month.

The three books center on a superior race which has evolved parallel to mankind, but remained hidden from them. The so-called Shadow Dwellers are distinguished by greater strength, faster reflexes, longer lives, and enhanced super-human abilities which vary from Shadow Dweller to Shadow Dweller.

The events in *Power Line* #1 are a direct result of the appearance of Doctor Zero in the world. Ripley, a rogue Shadow Dweller who makes use of his abilities in a wrestling career, realizes who Doctor Zero is when he sees him masquerading as a super-hero. He tries to convince the Shadow Dwellers they should offere their own super-hero, presenting a positive image for the Shadow race, doing great good with

Power Line: boom.

Zero's ulterior motives. He is unsuccessful, but fate then plays into his hands.

Victor Guillermos and Leonore Castle are two teen-aged Shadow Dwellers, both with what would be considered very weak and nearly useless Shadow powers. Though a series of circumstances, the two are brought together and find that their powers exponentially complement each other, to the point where their power level is nearly on a par with Zero's. When together, the duo can fly, create a very powerful force field and hurl electro-magnetic type blasts.

Ripley, who is Victor's uncle and guardian, sees the meeting of Victor and Leonore as a chance to take on the roles of super-heroes. Victor jumps at the idea, but Leonore requires more persuading. When she finally agrees (though not totally convinced), Ripley sets out to "market" the duo, drawing on his experience in a successful wrestling career. He provides them flashy costumes, dubs them "Power Line" and chooses a minor disaster in Indiana as the site of their public debut.

As with the other books in the Shadow Line Saga, Bill Sienkiewicz is painting the cover for the first issue, with Jay Muth contributing the cover for #2. Set to do future covers are Kevin O'Neill, Kent Williams, George Pratt, and possibly Kevin Nowlan. —BE—

THE POWER OF THE ATOM

Written by ROGER STERN; pencilled by DWAYNE TURNER; edited by MIKE CARLIN

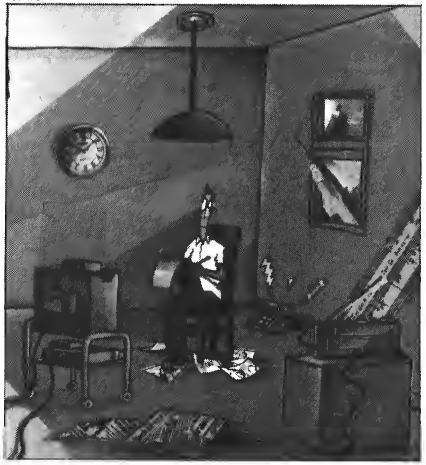
32 four-color pages. 75 cents; newsstand distribution; monthly from DC COMICS INC.

"The World's Smallest Super-Hero" will soon return to an active role in the DC Universe as *The Power of the Atom*, a new monthly edited by Mike Carlin and written by Roger Stern, debuts late this Spring. Now that the *Sword of the Atom* "sword and sorcery" storyline is exhausted, the Atom will be revamped—*without* having his previous continuity ignored.

Carlin adds that the hero's abilities will be altered, increasing his super-powers so that he won't merely be "just one of the boys." Readers shoud also remember that the Atom's alter ego, Ray Palmer, also carries with him a number of personal problems that may provide fodder for interesting sub-plots, such as his failed marriage to Jean Loring.

Additional development of this Atom revival will take place once an artist is secured. —ME—

One of the few Americans still in ***Prime Cuts****: Peter Kuper, with his cover for #8.*



POWER PACK

Written by JON BOGDANOVE and LOUISE SIMONSON; pencilled by JON BOGDANOVE and SAL VELLUTO; inked by STAN DRAKE; edited by CARL POTTS

32 four-color pages. $1.25; every 6 weeks from MARVEL COMICS

After so many months of preserving their secret, even from their parents, the Power kids are menaced by an unseen foe who claims to know the truth about their abilities. They struggle to learn their foe's identity and preserve their onw, with their lives at stake. They also confront the more immediate menace of the Sentinel Master Mold in the final

Pencilled sequence from ***Power Pack #38****, by Sal Velluto.*

"Fall of the Mutants" tie in (issue #37).

Franklin Richards will play a larger part in *Power Pack* as his own mutant powers, inherited from his parents (Mister Fantastic and the Invisible Woman from the Fantastic Four), develop further. *Power Pack* will continue to be an active part of the Marvel Universe.

PRIME CUTS

Written and illustrated by VARIOUS; edited by GARY GROTH

64 black-and-white pages, magazine size; $3.50; bi-monthly from FANTAGRAPHICS BOOKS, INC.

Yet more relentlessly elitist comic strips from the most relentlessly elitist crew of them all, in that anthology of the abstruse, *Prime Cuts*.

More foreign material, promises editor Gary Groth. "In fact, I'm thinking of turning it into a pretty anti-American magazine and throwing all Americans out," he muses.

Among the European material slated for upcoming issues: "Ana," a political strip that takes place in Paris in the late '80s, drawn by Francisco Solano Lopez, who did "Deep City" for Catalan, and written by his son; a serialized strip by Jacques Tardi, more Franquin, a one-pager by Joost Swarte. "We're also negotiating for a strip by Horacio Altuna, 'La Derniere Recre', a very grim, realistic urban strip about children, sort of a cross between *The 400 Blows* and *Pixote*." We should also see those comics stories by Pete Hamill, which were written in English as prose stories, and then translated into Japanese and adapted into comics form. They'll be re-translated into English, and Hamill will then be re-writing them. The stories will be serialized, and then probably collected in book form. One episode is entitled "The Story at the Corner" but "that might be changed to something more exciting like 'Massacre at Blind Man's Gulch,'" Groth notes.

Never fear, we'll see a few domestic faces as well: Dan Clowes, Kim Deitch, Phil Elliott, Michael T. Gilbert, Mark Lewis, Robert Kronlage, L.J. Kopf, Richard Sala, Mitch Manzer, and "a new cartoonist that sort of came in over the transom, Paul Ollswang. He does these little philosophical vignettes somewhat reminiscent of Herriman."

When asked to sum up the editorial difference between *Prime Cuts* and its closest relative *RAW*, Groth pauses. "Well, I think my tastes are far more latitudinarian than spiegelman's. It doesn't have the obsessive qualities of *RAW*. I think generally it's just a more catholic magazine."

—HMacD—

THE PRIVATEERS

Written and pencilled by THOMAS VAUGHN GRUMMETT; inked by VARIOUS; edited by PAT DAVIDSON

12-issue maxi-series; 24 four-color pages; $1.50; monthly from VANGUARD GRAPHICS

A new member for ***The Privateers****.*

The Privateers is an action-oriented space fantasy, set in the indeterminate future, where an evil cult known as the Dark Brotherhood plots to regain dominion over a shattered solar system.

Central to the Brotherhood's plans are the mysterious "Eyes of Talos"—twin crystal artifacts dating back to an ancient interplanetary power. Only one has ever been found.

"***The Privateers*** is the first in a 'series of series,' each of which will be a self-contained novel," states series writer Thomas Vaughn Grummett. The first two issues, released in the late summer of 1987, chronicled the destruction of the mining colony on the moon Ferrinrock by the Black Empress, in order to obtain the second Talos crystal. The sole survivors of the attack are: Lady Ferin, youngest daughter of the colony's ruling clan, Nimrod, a young psionic, and Captain Jinx, a female footsoldier. This small band manages to escape the Brotherhood's forces and makes its way to the lair of the exiled psionic master, Drogan, once a guardian of the Eyes of Talos. Issue #3, due out in December, 1987, continues this storyline.

By midpoint of the series, the newly formed ***Privateers*** begin an odyssey that pits them against the Black Empress (who learns the true secret of the Talos crystals), the Empress's Brotherhood allies, scavenging pirates, and each other. A new member joins their ranks—a gladiatorial fighter called Orbo the Crusher.

Thomas Grummett comments, "The Privateers will at last face their *true* adversary... one that they must join forces with their enemies to defeat."

—JH—

PROTOTYPE

Written by DAVID A. GENEREUX; pencilled by MIKE LUCK; inked by MIKE RITTER; edited by DAVID M. LYNCH

24 black-and-white pages $1.75 bi-monthly from DOUBLE DIAMOND ASSOCIATES

***Prototype* #1** is scheduled to hit the stands in February, 1988, reports Double Diamond publisher and editor David M. Lynch. "It has taken longer than expected to get the book out because we wanted everything to be satisfactory, and there was a slight problem with deadlines," says Lynch.

Prototype will tell the story of air traffic controller Michael Gilmour who, after a bullet grazes his temple, discovers he has computer implants in his brain. Michael can't remember how the computer parts were put in there, but he does start having some fuzzy, disturbing memories of a previous life as a soldier in Viet Nam. Michael is also being pursued by a corporate executive named Jason Meade, the very person responsible for the creation of the "Prototype." He has other problems too, other assailants—a second faction—want to kill him for some unknown reason.

If that isn't enough, issue #3 sees the introduction of a villain named Deathgrip. Deathgrip is a vicious antagonist with an artificial arm who likes to kill for money and, more often than not, for pleasure. David M. Lynch, who becomes co-scripter with issue #2, describes the Deathgrip character as a "super-villain in a world without super-heroes," or, "a Jack Kirby character in a Steve Ditko world." While Deathgrip's actions will be of a violent nature, much of violence will be committed off-panel. "We don't want to gross people out," says Lynch, although he adds, "Deathgrip will probably become the most popular character in the book."

As the ***Prototype*** series progresses, Michael will learn more about his past, his present perils and why the left half of his brain is now computerized. During the first six or seven issues, Mike discovers he—his previous persona actually—has an ex-wife and son. He will meet and interact with them, although he already has a girlfriend. He continues to have weird flashbacks that even his computer brain cannot explain. Lynch says that while Michael does have some artificial elements in his body, they are plugged into Mike's natural senses: sight, sound, taste, touch, etc. He is *not* a cyborg, and he does *not* have super strength. But he does have some pretty tough times ahead as he must face Meade Computronics, Deathgrip, the second faction, an ex-wife, and a current girlfriend... all while coping with a split personality (of sorts).

It is possible Michael may soon be able to flashback in color. David M. Lynch says that Double Diamond Associates want to go to color interiors as soon as this young firm can afford the switchover from black and white. —JH—

PROWLER

Written by TIM TRUMAN and MICHAEL PRICE; illustrated by JOHN K. SNYDER III and GRAHAM NOLAN; edited by CAT YRONWODE

32 four-color pages, $1.75; monthly from ECLIPSE COMICS

Prowler is again on the "prowl" in 1988. This dark mystery tale by Tim Truman has garnered a lot of praise, and the adventure continues. Starting with issue #5 Leo and Scott meet a couple of Leo's pals from the 1940s, the Fighting Devil Dogs, a couple of marines. Together they all unite to bust a child pornography ring. This multi-part tale will be called "The Revenge of the Prowler," which some thought was given to making this a separate new mini-series again with #1. As this is being written, though, creator Tim Truman's plan is for it to be issue #5.

For this tale, Truman did a lot of research into the way kiddie-porn is circulated in this country. Truman does not hide his disgust for this topic and in this four-part tale we will be treated to many hideous faces. Young Scott, who has had misgivings about being a costumed hero, finds he is as absorbed in this crisis as Leo is in taking this ring out which is part of Leo's master plan to have Scott take on the mantle of the Prowler.

Truman hopes that "Revenge of the Prowler" will be good place for new readers to jump on. There will also be a new flexidisc in #6, which Truman did in the pages of *Scout* last year. Side One will feature a 1940s morale booster song by Michael Price and his musician friends which captures the flavor of WWII songs. The flip side Truman calls The Prowler TV series soundtrack in an attempt to give an audio feeling to the book.

The Prowler will also be on view in the *Airboy Meets the Prowler Special*, one of a number of one-shot issues which Eclipse is doing to cross-over their titles this Spring. The story fits in between *The Prowler* #4 and #5, and furthers Leo's plans for Scott.

The artwork will continue to be handled by John K. Snyder III, and in the back-up slot, Michael Price and Graham Nolan will continue their stories of the original Leo Kragg Prowler from the '30s and '40s. Give ***Prowler*** a look-see. —ES—

PSI-FORCE

Written by FABIAN NICIEZA; pencilled by RON LIM; inked by MIKE WITHERBY; edited by HOWARD MACKIE

32 four-color pages, $1.25; monthly from MARVEL COMICS GROUP

Following the destruction of Pittsburgh, paranormals throughout the New Universe will find themselves in a lot of trouble.

Separated when Sanctuary was destroyed, the members of Psi-Force are on the run and pursued by two factions. First, the C.I.A. hires the Medusa Web, an international group of bounty hunters, to trace them. When that contract is broken, the military uses Spitfire to apprehend the teens.

Half the group is captured. Thomas, Stasi and Kathy are held in a military base, and Wayne, Tyrone and Lindsey attempt a rescue. But do their teammates want to be rescued?

The death of an original team member, a confrontation with D.P. 7, and the showdown between Psi-Hawk and Rodstvow lead into #25. Meanwhile, the world is heading toward World War III.

PSYCHOBLAST

Written by STEVEN GRANT; pencilled by ROB PHIPPS; inked by AL VEY; edited by RICK OLIVER

32 four-color pages, $1.75; monthly from FIRST COMICS

As you may have noticed, the first year of ***Psychoblast*** has been and will continue to be concerned with resolving Brian Burke's various family problems, culminating in #13, which will be a real big blow out, according to author Steven Grant.

"The New Order works together about as well as you'd expect a group of people with superpowers to work together," Grant continues. "In #7 we find out the origin of D.S.X. Machina, and have something of a battle between Psychoblast and D.S.X. Machina. In the meantime Taryn is searching for Burke's father on behalf of D.S.X. and runs across one of the people who used to know him named Jered Dedrick who now has this magic survivalism group up around Spokane. He's a little off his rocker. Issue #8 is Psychoblast vs. Dedrick and we destroy a decent chunk of Spokane in that story, and this leads to big problems for Psychoblast because #9 has him in a very bad coma and under attack. Issue #9 is the big blow out against D.S.X. Machina, and wraps up the New Order storyline—at least for the time being—and gives us some indication of the real origin of superpowers in Psychoblast's world." And it's an origin which you might no expect.

"In #10 Taryn and Burke team up to finally find Burke's father, and in issue #11 we find out the real origin of Psychoblast, where we find out all we ever want to know about superpowers and who's got them and why. Issue #12 features the return of Arabella, and the big final fight between Psychoblast and Arabella and the unification of both Psychoblast minds.

"And issue #13 is a complete cataclysm," Grant notes, a bit gleefully. "And we probably destroy a lot of San Francisco."

After #13 we'll see such personages as the Nth Generation, the Skeleton Crew and the Resurrector Set.

Although well aware of all the psycho-analytical and Jungian references which one could draw from ***Psychoblast***, Grant feels that's not really the focus of the book. "I don't know if there's an awful lot of psychological analysis. It depends on how you want to interpret [it]. If you want, his other self is his id. If you want, I try to steer clear of delineations like that, because I don't think it's that clear in anybody. But there is a reason why his conscious and unconscious minds are separated." —HMacD—

PUMA BLUES

Written by STEPHEN MURPHY; illustrated by MICHAEL ZULLI

24 black-and-white pages, $1.70; monthly from AARDVARK-ONE INTERNATIONAL

Following the somewhat fragmented issues of Gavia watching his father's tapes, it's back outdoors for the ***Puma Blues*** cast, in a storyline running through issue #18. Writer Stephen Murphy prefers to say little about it, mentioning only that those giant flying mantas play prominent roles in several issues. "The real time aspects of the story take over for quite a while," he says. "It's just... outdoorsy, involving Gavia, Jack, Sukie, Europa, Ruth and Ernest. The stage has been set in the first 12 issues. I really think the [next] 12 are much more linear."

Michael Zulli will be experimenting

The Prowler meets Ed Gein in #7!

*ABOVE: The new **Psi-Force**, drawn by Ron Lim. BELOW: **Psychoblast**.*

An unused ad for Puma Blues.

with a new technique, using gray-toned markers, to "try to capture a more realistic look, especially in terms of sunset, the time around sunset and sunrise, the ambiance of grays and whites that aren't quite distinctive."

Readers must have gathered by now that Murphy is very much concerned about the environment and wildlife—he writes all the "Notes on Environment" himself—and indeed, ecological concerns were the springboard for the book. Does he consider himself an "environmentalist," for want of a better term?

"I feel very strongly about the state of the world. Even though we're making small strides, ecologically, I feel that the larger problems, more global problems aren't being dealt with quickly enough. I don't know what to call myself either, just an environmentalist, or what. I don't like labels that much. I can't label the book either."

Murphy also stresses that although the book has been delayed by printing problems, it is most definitely monthly.

—HMacD—

THE PUNISHER

Written by MIKE BARON, pencilled by WHILCE PORTACIO, inked by SCOTT WILLIAMS, edited by CARL POTTS

32 four-color pages, $1.00, newsstand distribution every 6 weeks from MARVEL COMICS GROUP

Marvel's most popular new title will continue to get grittier in 1988, and writer Mike Baron welcomes the art team of Whilce Portacio and Scott Williams.

Issues #8 and 9 feature the Punisher's vendetta against a group of people involved with insider trading, a storyline planned quite a few months before the recent "Black Monday" stock market crash on October 19, 1987. Assisted by a down-on-his-luck bowery bum who once was a stockbroker, the Punisher is faced with an agonizing dilemma: should he tackle the insider traders, whose actions affect millions of people across the nation, or should he capture a slasher that is murdering the homeless, who is also placing the life of his informant friend in peril?

The Punisher takes time to talk out a problem with a misguided youth.

The Man Without Fear (no, not Ollie North) guest stars in #10's "The Creep," a shocker about a psychopath who laces over-the-counter products with cyanide. This story also crosses over into the pages of *Daredevil*.

***The Punisher* #11** pits the vigilante against a ring of smugglers who are secretly ushering illegal aliens across the Mexican border. These smugglers have a nasty habit of leaving their hidden passengers in automobile trunks to suffocate when the threat of police intervention is near. During his one-man war agains the smugglers, the Punisher is blinded and forced to rely upon a young Mexican girl for aid.

Using a helicopter, the Punisher breaks *into* prison in **#12** to rescue a Ted Bundy-like serial killer whose lawyers constantly keep his death sentence from being realized. When it appears that the murderer may be granted yet another trial, the Punisher elects to remove him from prison and perform the execution himself. From there, Baron states that "everything goes wrong" as a bizarre terrorist group also comes into play.

Beginning with **#11**, ***The Punisher*** will be published *monthly*, promising fans blood and guts every four weeks instead of six.

This summer, artist Mark Texeira joins Baron for ***The Punisher Annual* #1**, part of a major Marvel Comics crossover where "the High Evolutionary is trying to wipe out every scumbag in humanity, in order to cleanse the Earth for its next stage of evolution." The High Evolutionary sends a hit squad of "eliminators" to Colombia to exterminate a cocaine kingpin—the *same* criminal that the Punisher happens to be tracking. Circumstances in the story cause the Punisher to join forces with the gangster to battle the High Evolutionary's assassins.

—MS—

Q

QUADRANT

Written and illustrated by PETER HSU

32 black-and-white pages, $1.95, bi-monthly from QUADRANT (Mature Readers)

The comic that promises "lotsa stunning starships, malevolent robots, ugly aliens, and beautiful nekkid women" continues this noble tradition. In **#8** there is the final segment of the *Hellrazor* saga that Peter Hsu is drawing from Tara Ballance's scripts (see important note at the end of this preview).

Buzz Dixon, science fiction author, whose work has appeared in Eclipse's ***Alien Worlds*** and the ***G.I. Joe*** tv show, has turned in three stories, including one called "Succubus" all drawn by Hsu.

"Travesty of Justice," written and drawn by Hsu, is featured in **#10**, and has a strong emphasis on science fiction.

IMPORTANT NOTE to ***Quadrant*** fans: Hsu promises on bended knee, by which he also begs forgiveness for its excessive tardiness, that the ***Quadrant Graphic Novel: Hellrazor*** will be out before the end of '87. It will include all of the ***Hellrazor*** series from ***Quadrant* #1-8** written by Tara Ballance and drawn by Hsu, will sell for $40.00, be 160 pages, glossy stock, black-and-white, hardcover.

—KD—

THE QUESTION

Written by DENNY O'NEIL, pencilled by DENYS COWAN, inked by RICK MAGYAR, edited by MIKE GOLD

32 four-color pages, $1.75, monthly from DC COMICS INC. (Mature Readers)

Issue **#15** of ***The Question*** is what Denny O'Neil calls a "slight push against our envelope of security." The story deals with Loomis McCarthy, a private detective, who is extremely bigoted. "I gave him the kind of dialogue that such people would speak," says O'Neil. "It has the total effect of completely disorienting Vic Sage, and totally blowing what preconceptions he has left about humanity out of the water. He comes to hate this guy, and rightfully so. One of my big fears with this story is that people will assume that since the character thinks that, that I also think that, since I wrote the words. I want to make this clear, that if ever I have distanced myself from a character, it is this one. I used to know a lot of people like him when I grew up in the Midwest, and I suspect that if I looked for them in New York, there would be plenty of them around here too.

"I'm certain that we're going to get a lot of nasty mail," continues O'Neil "about how we could possibly write this stuff. I just ask people to look at my track record in dealing with prejudice and social issues, and they'll see that I've done anything but spreak the cause of bigotry. [Artist] Denys [Cowan] is black, and he was also very nervous about drawing the story, but saw the importance of the issue. We're trying to teach the readers something about prejudice and bigotry and judging others." In the story, blacks are being brutally murdered thoughout Hub City, and Sage doesn't know who's to blame. "This story is another example of how we're trying to upset people's expectations of the comic, by breaking through those expectations. That does not mean that we condone the behavior presented, though."

Issue **#16** begins a three-part story, the first part of which tells the story of Izzy O'Toole, the only honest cop in Hub City. As he eventually gains notoriety in the city, he begins to understand what being a myth can mean. Two new villains are introduced; some former cheap hoods who are now calling themselves Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid. "While the Sundance Kid knows that the whole thing is phoney, the man playing Butch Cassidy really believes that he is Butch Cassidy. They run up against Izzy, and eventually against the Question."

A ***Watchmen*** cross-over (sort of) will be in issue **#17**, entitled "A Dream of Rorschach!" "The story represents a behavioral dip for Sage," says O'Neil, "and he kind of reverts back to the character he was in issue **#1**. In every amount of change, one is always faced with a step backwards now and then, and Sage does so in this story. He is aware of it, and the people around him are aware of it." In his attempts to run down Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid, he gets on a plane. In an airport bookstore, he picks up a copy of the ***Watchmen*** trade paperback, and in the process of reading it, begins to identify with Rorschach. He dreams about Rorschach and also Loomis McCarthy, and ends up confused about his own methods. "What he hasn't learned yet is that tough is never enough by itself." At the end of the issue, he has been surprised and is about to be killed, when the men about to kill him are shot by arrows. Guess who?

If you guessed Hawkeye, you deserve to be repeatedly slapped in the face with a soggy Solson comic. If, however, you guessed Green Arrow, then proceed with your reading. Yes, issue **#18** will feature the two characters whom O'Neil feels belong in the same universe. "They're very similar as characters. They belong in a much darker, grittier, realistic type of universe. They are not your normal super-heroes." Green Arrow is instrumental in putting Sage back on the right track, and Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid are captured.

Future issues will have a lot to do with the elections in Hub City. Myra is running for mayor, and has to come to grips with her motivations behind wanting the title. In the November issue, O'Neil plans to show the outcomes to the electoral race in Hub City. "I don't know yet if Myra will win or not. I have planted seeds which can lead the story either way."

Lady Shiva will be returning and will be featured as a stronger character. She will also appear in some issues of ***Batman*** and ***Detective Comics***, all of which will lead into her own mini series or ongoing series late next year. A ***Question Annual*** is expected to appear in late summer, which is planned to be a purely martial arts story.

—AM—

R

RACER X

Written by FRED SCHILLER, pencilled by GEORGE BOOKER, inked by MARK McKENNA, edited by CYGNET ASH

24 four-color pages, $1.75, monthly from NOW COMICS

Read the following preview first! Done? Okay.

Issue **#1** of ***Racer X*** will follow on the heels of ***Racer X: Premiere*** in June, 1988, and will be published in the regular NOW comic book format. Writer Fred Schiller says that issues **#1** through **11** will continue the storyline begun in ***Premiere***—that of the G.A.S. Company's New Scientists. The New Scientists master the "new science" of magnetic combustion, a source of energy that can either benefit the world greatly . . . or destroy it. Racer X is drawn into the conflict that develops, and Schiller promises "drama, humor and excitement" in issues to come. The New Scientists storyline will wrap up with issue **#12**, planned to be presented in the ***Premiere*** issue's prestige format.

While characters from the ***Speed Racer*** series will appear from time to time in the ***Racer X*** book, they will be depicted in a different graphic manner (the ***Racer X*** book style).

—JH—

RACER X: PREMIERE

Written by FRED SCHILLER, pencilled by GEORGE BOOKER, inked by MARK McKENNA, edited by CYGNET ASH

one-shot, 42 four-color pages, squarebound, $3.75, from NOW COMICS

"This is going to be the best book of 1988," says NOW Comics spokesman Tony Caputo. Why? Because in this deluxe premiere issue of ***Racer X***—not to be confused with issue **#1**, which will follow—fans of Speed Racer's enigmatic older brother will discover his innermost secrets, revealed one by one. "The book will include six pages of highly classified files," promised Caputo.

Writer Fred Schiller will be giving the book a more "realistic" feel, as will artist George Booker. Booker has modelled the major characters on real-life personages; Rex Racer (Racer X) is suggestive of Elvis Presley, while "Pops" recalls the visage of the coach of the Chicago Bears football team. Tony Caputo comments, "Elvis was the original model for Rex in the 1965 TV series." Although the direction is people-oriented, Caputo says that there will be lots of high-tech gadgets, adventure and "spy stuff."

The premiere issue will concentrate on explaining how ***Racer X*** came to be, and

Mark Zingarelli's autobiographical explorations begin in **Real Life**.

on depicting his mysterious employers, the G.A.S.—Global Arms Security—Company. Readers familiar with the ***Speed Racer*** animated series will know a little about Rex Racer because he is Speed's brother, but NOW's book will elaborate on the sketchy information available. In this story, readers will walk a bit in Rex's shoes, learn secrets about his past and present, and watch as he gets a new costume and a new car in which to perform his espionage.

The Racer family does make an appearance, as does a villainous South American mogul named Chase Dresden, who is out to kidnap the G.A.S. Company's "New Scientists." But Rex will be the center of attention. "Racer X has a license to speed . . . and a license to kill," says Tony Caputo.

If all goes well, issue #12 wil be the next prestige format ***Racer X*** book, with the prestige format becoming an annual event. ***Racer X: Premiere*** ships May, 1988. —JH—

REAL LIFE

Written and illustrated by MARK ZINGARELLI; edited by GARY GROTH

32 black-and-white pages; magazine format; $2.50; irregular from FANTAGRAPHICS BOOKS (Mature Readers)

Real Life is entirely written and drawn by Mark Zingarelli, whose work has previously been seen in ***Weirdo*** and ***American Splendor***, among other things. The first issue will feature two autobiographical stories: "Augustus Di Primo's Miracle Meats," a look back at Zingarelli's childhood and a butcher he knew; the other, "The World's Number One Cadillac Fan," tells the story of what happens when the narrator meets a scuzzy fellow whose one passion in life is Cadillacs and agrees to meet with him. —JC—

THE REALM

Plotted by RALPH GRIFFITH; scripted by STUART KERR; pencilled by GARY DAVIS; inked by SANDY SCHREIBER

32 black-and-white pages; $1.50; bi-monthly from ARROW COMICS

There's magic, murder, and even a dragon (maybe) in store as Arrow aims to make ***The Realm*** monthly in February 1988. The story appearing in issue **#11** (November, 1987) will lead to the death of one of the four main characters in issue **#15** (April, 1988). Issues in between will present ***The Realm***'s "shuffling buffalo" version of vampires, and introduce Terrorek, a new rival to antagonize the evil Darkoff.

The members of the original foursome continue to go through personal changes in ***The Realm***. Sandy, now in league with Darkoff, emerges as a very evil person, which has direct effect on Marge and the others. Alex encounters other magic users and learns more about himself and his own powers. The romance between Dominique and Silver Fawn, an elf, heats up, this attraction causes extremely mixed feelings within Dominique, as Sandy was his girlfriend previously. At the same time, Silver Fawn is reluctant to get involved with a human being, as her late husband was a human and she doesn't want the pain of losing another mortal lover.

Darkoff becomes concerned that young Alex's powers may become a threat to him, so he sends out assassins—monsters, humans and a wizard named Norvose—to capture or destroy him. Norvose is the first of two magic users Alex will meet, the second is a mad, powerful wizard dwelling on the far side of the continent (scheduled to appear in issue #20). These meetings lead Alex to discover how he came to cross the barrier between the two worlds, and the nature of his purpose in the Realm.

"We'll be introducing a lot more different creatures," promises series plotter Ralph Griffith. "And you may even see the mystery dragon by issue **#18** (May, 1988)," he adds. Barbarian Letha Kazan, a popular character, may be making a guest appearance at some point to battle said dragon. —JH—

RED SHETLAND

Written by JIM GIROAT and RICHARD KONKLE; illustrated by JIM GIROAT and DARIN DAVIS; edited by JIM GIROAT

one-shot; 32 black-and-white pages; $2.00; from GRAPHXPRESS

This is a spin-off from Graphxpress's ***Equine the Uncivilized*** title. Red Shetland, a funny-animal pastiche of Marvel's Red Sonja female-Conan counterpart, has appeared in ***Equine*** from time to time. Publisher Jim Groat says, "Red Shetland is ***the*** fan favorite, and the readers have been demanding more of her. This is planned as a special, but depending on how sales are, will be made into a regular comic (quarterly)."

As readers of ***Equine*** are aware, the 5'2" red-haired pony warrior filly is basically trying to get laid. The problem is that, according to her youthful vow to her warrior goddess, Mothra (who is not a goddess to be crossed), "I must stand alone, with but the strength of my arms and the bite of my blade . . . never to accept a male's assist or loving embrace . . . until I am humbled by the steed who is my better." In other words, she can't just surrender to any handsome stud who takes her fancy. He's got to be able to beat "the She-Stallion With a Sword," who so far has been able to out-arm wrestle,

Red Shetland.

out fight, and out-drink every male she's come across. As she grows hornier . . . ur, aware that life is passing her by, she becomes increasingly desperate to track down and meet the legendary Equine, the fabulous barbarian warrior who may be her only chance to get out of her vows. —FPn—

REDFOX

Written by FOX, CHRIS BELL and Mr. BROWN THE ACCOUNTANT; drawn by FOX

24 black-and-white pages; $1.95; bi-monthly from MALIK WIL PRESS

Since the last *Preview* issue all plans announced for ***Redfox*** have been altered, so ignore that and read on.

Issue #13 will begin in the Grindstone as announced, but Redfox and Lyssa's quiet conversation over a brew or two will be interrupted by the arrival of Thorn, a wounded fugitive. Whitefox and Trog see off his pursuers, and it's discovered that he's one of an elite group of mercenaries named the Condottieri, and has vital information for them.

The following issue Lyssa and Redfox brave a blizzard to help Thorn reach his comrades, and the trio are chased by the hounds of Goel, an unhuman type who's determined to kill Thorn and prevent his information from getting through. An honest to goodness one hundred percent solid gold genuinely literal cliff-hanger ending is promised to this issue.

Redfox is separated from her allies by issue #15, and her attempts to locate them are aided by various small denizens of the wild who require her help in halting the incursion of the ice elementals. These nasty spirits are attempting an incursion into the power void vacated by Fumirole. "It may end up being always Winter and never Christmas if the situation isn't brought back to balance," warns scripter Chris Bell ominously. Despite her best efforts and the help of the sprites the issue ends with several towering figures in black armor looming over Redfox.

Let's hope she's dressed up warmly for all that snow and ice. —FPn—

REID FLEMING, THE WORLD'S TOUGHEST MILKMAN

Written and illustrated by DAVID BOSWELL

32 black-and-white pages; $2.00; every now and then from ECLIPSE

As per the last *Preview*, ***Reid Fleming*** is delayed indefinitely, as David Boswell works on scripting the ***Reid Fleming*** motion picture. Meanwhile, Eclipse will be reprinting Boswell's ***Heartbreak Comics*** in a 44-page squarebound edition in January. The book will also feature never-before-seen pages from Boswell's sketchbook. There will be a hardcover edition of the book available, printed on opaque "book paper." (Actually, ***both*** editions are printed on book paper, but it sounds more impressive that way.) —JW—

RELENTLESS PURSUIT

Written and illustrated by JEFF KEAR; edited by JOHN NORLAND II

8-issue limited series; 32 black-and-white pages; $2.00; monthly from BLACKBIRD COMICS

The scope of ***Cameron***, Kear's last-mentioned series for Blackbird, grew so large that it is more likely to appear as a series of graphic novels at a later date. Replacing it in the more immediately future is ***Relentless Pursuit***, a retelling of the Nez Perce Indian War of 1877, solicited for a January release.

A group of chiefs of the Nez Perce tribe that settled in Idaho did not want to accede to being moved onto a reservation. When they finally agreed to the move, some of the younger indians—under alcoholic influence—began killing people. The tribe packed up and ran for the Montanan border and what they thought would be safety when the army was dispatched after them. The army followed them, though, through a thousand miles of rough Idaho and Montana terrain. The Nez Perce outran the army, outfought them, and nearly succeeded in joining up with Sitting Bull in Canada, while carrying their every possession, their families and their livestock. They were finally caught forty miles short of the border by Colonel Nelson A. Miles and General Howard when they stopped for a last night's rest. It was there that Chief Joseph was to give a speech many readers will recognize. "One of the selling points of the book, I think," says Kear, "is that it is all fact. I worked from extensive historical and pictorial references. Everybody who had his picture in a book will look like he really looked. Many of the conversations in the book are as they really took place, recorded by the U.S. Army or the Indians themselves." The war itself is the basis for the series, but Kear plans to add an epilogue telling the fates of many of the historical figures in his story.

Publisher Nordland is fully aware of the unlikelihood of commercial success of a historical comic, but is prepared to stand behind Kear's creative vision. "I keep saying, 'I'm trying to stretch the boundaries.' I'll give anything a shot if it looks good, and he's ***definitely*** got a decent storyline. He's hot about it, and if he's hot about it then he's going to turn in the best work he can do. If it doesn't work out at this point, then we'll wait until I have enough money to where I don't care." He was surprised at Kear's desire to do a western, citing an art style that on first view seemed too slick, but thinks readers who give it a try will be pleasantly surprised. Kear says that, due to his use of photographic source material, everything will look authentic, but that he is deliberately emphasizing storytelling. "The story is the thing, more than artwork." —EV—

RENEGADE ROMANCE

Written and illustrated by VARIOUS; edited by TRINA ROBBINS

page count and price UNDETERMINED; annual from RENEGADE PRESS

Last year's ***Renegade Romance*** was so well received that a second issue will be appearing next summer, featuring yet more tales of the human heart in its

Character sketches from **Relentless Pursuit**.

various conundrums. Editor Trina Robbins, an outspokenly unabashed fan of romance comics, feels "pleased and justified" by the response to the first issue. Contributors include Cynthia Martin, Mary Wilshire, Steve Leialoha, and the conclusion to Trina's own "Red Love."

"This [issue] may be better than the first and I was real proud of the first," Robbins predicts. —HMacD—

RETROGRADE

Written by GREGG KENDRICK; illustrated by FRANK TURNER

32 black-and-white pages, $1.95; monthly from ETERNITY COMICS

A crippled teenager, an anti-social misfit, a finely-tuned athlete, the woman he loves, a brilliant student, a psychopathic soldier. Transformed by Project Phalanx into something more than human, these men and women are about to become front-line soldiers in a secret interdimensional war, the fate of the Earth resting on the outcome. Welcome to Eternity's super-hero saga—***Retrograde***.

"***Retrograde*** has something for everyone," series co-creator Gregg Kendrick said. "Super-heroes, parallel dimensions, even a dragon or two. But the action will not overshadow the characters. Future issues will elaborate on the

Retrograde: something for everyone

characters' origins and powers, as well as character developments people won't expect. "These characters are mortal!" Kendrick said, adding that ***Retrograde*** was not their name, it's what's happening to them.

THE RETURN OF MEGATON MAN

Written and illustrated by DONALD SIMPSON; edited by DENIS KITCHEN

3-issue limited series, 32 four-color pages, $2.00; monthly from KITCHEN SINK PRESS

Megaton Man returns—pencilled panel by Donald Simpson

You were wondering perhaps why ***Border Worlds*** was put on hiatus? ***The Return of Megaton Man***, debuting late in June 1988, is certainly part of the reason.

The mini-series will pick up where ***Megaton Man #10*** left off two years before. "It's typical Simpson," says editor/publisher Denis Kitchen. "It's irreverent stuff, parodying not just super-heroes, but also standing as more of a broad-based social satire."

What isn't certain is whether the series's numbering will pick up where ***Megaton Man #10*** left off. Kitchen and Simpson are arguing over whether to number the series anew or resume with ***#11***. Kitchen favors the former, Simpson the latter. Stay tuned. —BE—

REVENGERS

Written by ELLIOT MAGGIN; pencilled by NEAL ADAMS; inked by IAN AKIN and BRIAN GARVEY

32 full-color pages, $2.00; newsstand distribution; bi-monthly from CONTINUITY GRAPHICS

In ***Revengers #5***, we will be finishing the tragic story of the New Clear Warlock (Nuclear Warlock), a man who, suffering from radiation poisoning, seeks a cure in magic. As these two forces fight through his body, more of ***both*** is needed. The Warlock has lured a townful of uneducated people to his haven to help him create both. The people in turn fall victim to the radiation and then the magic... dispensed by the New Clear Warlock.

Issues ***#6-7*** concern an alien invasion of the U.N. building, by unearthly young aliens. The secret origin of these strange creatures and their meaning to the future of mankind will be far-reaching indeed. Look for these two issues to spin off a new comic, titled ***Hybrids***, scheduled to be pencilled by Larry Stroman.

RIP OFF COMIX

Written by VARIOUS; pencilled by VARIOUS; edited by FRED TODD

52 black-and-white pages, magazine format, $2.95; from RIP OFF PRESS (Mature Readers)

Up against the wall, long-hair! I saw you with that copy of the "Adventures Under Arrest" issue (***#17***) of ***Rip Off Comix***, which is just hitting the stands as I'm hitting you with my billyclub. This peacenik... liberal, anti-police abuse, propaganda features work by Dan O'Neill, Dori Seda, Larry Welz, R.L. Crabb, Don Simpson, Larry Marder, in addition to many other ex-cons, felons, etc. Each story is a true accounting of these hippie freak weirdoes with the fine, upstanding enforcers of the law (***Judge Dredd*** fans, take note.)

If you get out of jail in time, you'll want to pick up a copy of ***Rip Off #18***, which should be out some time in March. It will feature Bruce Bollinger's "Stranger in a Strange Land"—A Hippie in the Bible Belt, Fred Stack, Foolbert Sturgeon, and more.

And if I catch you using the pages as rollin' paper again... you're in a heap o' trouble, boy! —KD—

ROACHMILL

Written and illustrated by RICH HEDDEN and TOM McWEENEY; edited by RANDY STRADLEY

32 black-and-white pages, $1.75; bi-monthly from DARK HORSE COMICS

Roachmill #1 of this "new series from Dark Horse" is actually the second part of a two-part story begun in ***Roachmill #6*** from Blackthorne Comics. ***Roachmill*** tells the adventures of an exterminator around the year 2981, who lives in a New York populated by a large variety of pests: insects, animals, aliens, and humans. Issue ***#1*** is titled "The Adventures of the Rooftop Raider: Part 2," in which a very angry Roachmill continues to pursue the "hero," the Rooftop Raider. Will Roachmill get to him before the local hoods do? Friction between Roachmill and Boyle doesn't help when Boyle interferes with his job. Background information will appear, explaining who the Rooftop Raider is, and why he does what he does. A text recap piece will also be included, for new readers.

Issue ***#2*** starts another two-part story, called "Dog City." "Strangely enough," says co-creator Tom McWeeney, "it is based on a true story, no matter how bizarre it sounds. This story is non-stop action. It's shaping up to be the best story we've done. We're really happy with it." In the story, Roachmill is hired by an airline company which is putting a luxury satellite mall/resort/hotel in space above the Earth. As each section is built, mutant guard dogs are put in each area, to discourage vandalism. Unfortunately, since the automatic feeder is never installed, the dogs go crazy, and have to find food. Guess what starts happening to the human work crews? Roachmill is hired to go up to the satellite, and finds the situation has completely gone... to the dogs! —AM—

*A charming page from **Roachmill**, now at Dark Horse*

ROBOTECH MASTERS

Written by MIKE BARON; pencilled by HARRISON FONG; inked by BILL ANDERSON; edited by MAGGIE BRENNER

32 four-color pages, $1.50; every 6 weeks from COMICO

Well, folks, this wraps up ***Robotech Masters*** In ***#21***, titled "Final Nightmare," the 15th Squadron is followed by Nova and Zor to the crash site of the SDF1. Bowie and Musica make the startling discovery that the Protoculture is mutating, and that the Invid is on the way. Zor and the 15th infiltrate the Masters' ship in an effort to rescue General Emerson, and stop the Masters, in issue ***#22***—"The Invid Connection." In an attempt to end the ***Second Robotech War***, final battle is launched. Zor tries to wipe out the Masters' entire culture before the Invid arrive in the final issue titled "Catastrophe." How will it all end? What will become of Zor? Where can I get compact discs at a decent price? Almost all of these questions will be answered in ... —JW—

ROBOTECH SPECIAL

Written by MARKALAN JOPLIN; pencilled by THOMAS A. TENNEY; inked by MIKE CHEN; edited by MAGGIE BRENNER

40 full-color pages, price undetermined, one-shot from COMICO

At last! The book that all of you ***Robotech*** fans have been clamoring for. As we all know, ***Robotech: The Macross Saga*** will end with episode ***#36*** of the original television episodes, while ***Robotech Masters*** started with episode ***#38***. What's missing? Why, ***#37***, of course. This pivotal episode will be adapted as ***The Robotech Special***, with much of the source material expanded upon by Markalan Joplin.

The special is told from Dana's point of view, and will serve as a virtual reference book for the entire ***Robotech*** series. As Dana reflects on her past and her heritage, (remember, Dana's parents are Max and Miriya, the first "inter-species" marriage in the series) many of readers' questions about the series will be answered. Look for the ***Robotech Special*** in early summer. —JW—

ROBOTECH: THE MACROSS SAGA

Written by MARKALAN JOPLIN; pencilled by MIKE LEEKE; inked by MIKE CHEN; edited by MAGGIE BRENNER

32 four-color pages, $1.50; every 6 weeks from COMICO

Did you know that of all the titles I've ever previewed, ***R:TMS*** is the most fun to type? Just read on, and you'll see why: it's all those neat names.

These issues mark a major turning point in the Macross Saga. In ***#25***, which is called "Wedding Bells" (and is, coincidentally, a great Godley and Creme song!), we witness the first wedding of Human to Zentraidi to negotiate a peace settlement, and Exedore is sent as "The Messenger" (which is ***#26***'s title) to the SDF1. Little does Exedore know that he's been duped by Dolza, who is using the

negotiations as a front to amass an armada of 1.8 million ships! In #27, "A Force Of Arms," this forces Breetai and Gloval to join forces. There is a surprise turn of events which leads to #28, which is aptly called "Reconstruction Blues." It's a big turning point just chock full o' surprises.

See? Didn't I tell you those names were neat?

–JW–

ROBOTECH: THE NEW GENERATION

Written by MARKALAN JOPLIN, pencilled by THOMAS A. TENNEY, inked by RICH RANKIN, edited by MAGGIE BRENNER

32 four-color pages, $1.50, every 6 weeks from COMICO

This is it. The end of the last of the Robotech titles. Let's hope it's a happy one. We start with #21, called "Hired Gun." More insight into the Invid is gained by our Rebel group when they encounter a Human who was an experimental subject of the Invid. Loyalties are tested, and friendships are re-affirmed along the way. As the Rebel forces move closer to Reflex Point, they make a stop in the "Big Apple" (#22's title). They

An ending is in the offing for Robotech: The New Generation.

replenish their supplies, and encounter a group of resistance fighters. Well, they don't actually *fight*, per se. They're all actors, singers, and dancers, and they *fight* by living their lives as normally as possible. Issue #23 is titled "Reflex Point." In it, the secret's out! Marlene is hurt in a skirmish, and it's discovered that she's an Invid! She must decide where to turn as the Robotech Defense Force plans a major attack on Reflex Point. This leads to #24—"Dark Finale." The Rebel squad confronts the Regiss, which leads to the finale of the *Third Robotech War*, #25's "Symphony Of Light." Let's hope it all ends well. Or did I already say that?

–JW–

See comment on right hand page

ROG-2000

Written by NICK CUTI, illustrated by JOHN BYRNE, edited by J.COLLIER

2-issue series, 32 full-color pages, $2.00, monthly from FANTAGRAPHICS BOOKS

The long-promised reprint of John Byrne's "Rog 2000" strips, in full color for the first time, backed up with new strips by Freddy Milton and Mike Kazaleh, is now scheduled for April and May of this year. Unless FBI changes its mind, again.

ROGUE TROOPER

Written by GERRY FINLEY-DAY, illustrated by CAM KENNEDY, edited by BOB KEENAN

32 full-color pages, $1.25, monthly from QUALITY COMICS

In issue #14, the Traitor General and Rogue Trooper have been hunting each other for two years. Now comes the showdown, at the Quarz Zone, where so many GI's lost their lives. But what's a meeting of mortal enemies without a paying audience? Scavengers Bland and Brass have provided a blow-by-blow galaxy wide telecast of the fight. With a cover by Bart Sears.

In issue #15, after wandering the chemical wastelands of Nu-Earth, Rogue Trooper took some much needed rest and relaxation at a place known as "The Gasbah." The Gasbah is an interesting place, filled with the descendants of aliens trapped planetside ever since the war began and enough danger and double dealing to make those chem-wastes look positively peaceful. Another Bart Sears cover presides.

In issue #16, Rogue Trooper is offered a chance to find the Traitor General, clear his own name and get new bodies for Helm, Gunnar, and Bagman. All he has to do is join Colonel Kovert's secret war, land on the moon, infiltrate the North Base and get out alive with the information (what will he do for the rest of the day?). Issue #16 also offers a Judge Dredd bonus feature by T.B. Grover and Ron Smith. Just what are German WWII planes doing in Mega-City One anyway?

–MSM–

Rogue Trooper cover by Bart Seers

ROSCOE THE DAWG

Written and illustrated by MARTIN TRENGOVE

24 black-and-white pages, $2.00, bi-monthly from RENEGADE PRESS

Caught in the dreaded black and white squeeze, Roscoe the dog that walks like a man and wears a trenchcoat to boot will come to a premature end at Renegade with issue #4. Originally planned as the first half of a two-parter, this issue will now contain that faithful standby of artists in need: reprints. But what reprints! From the subtle pencil tones on "My Aim is True" (*Inkspots* #2) to two more recent strips from early issues of *Fox Comics*, these are anything but filler material and as well there is an all-new story to round things out.

Should sales swing drastically upwards again, of course, the book will continue

***Rocketeer Adventure Megazine** isn't on the schedule yet, but wild horses couldn't have prevented us from running these pages.*

Character sketches from The Rovers

from Renegade, but if as is more likely things continue on a downward path it will be back to Roscoe's most recent home *Fox Comics* [*see separate entry*] where he should have a few adventures towards the middle of the year. After that, Trengove is thinking of giving the character a rest for a while to finally have a chance at drawing something different for change. —PB—

ROVERS

Written by S.A. BENNETT; pencilled by SCOTT BIESER; inked by MIKE ROBERTS

32 black-and-white pages; $1.95; monthly from ETERNITY COMICS

The Rovers are Special Ed Kaprisky and The Cinderella Kid, teen-age bounty hunters who operate in a desolate near future, a future devastated by plague known as The Red Death. Called "decent" by industry insiders and hailed by Don Thompson as "not bad," things get very intense for our heroes in 1988.

What can we expect in future issues? "A balance between the action and adventure and more character-oriented stories," said author S.A. Bennett. As the year progresses, The Boys become increasingly dissatisfied with their lives and will attempt to go off-line and head for the territories, "those beyond Ohio, where the 'civilized' world ends," Bennett said. Under martial law, this is considered to be desertion, punishable by death.

In *The Rovers* #4, Special Ed and The Kid face a murderous wolf pack known as "The Pros From Dover," Grout and J.D. "They're easy to tell apart," Bennett said. "Once carries a flame-thrower, and the other a samurai sword."

Issue #5 is the partial original of Special Ed, with excerpts from his diary, and #6 is "a cross between an old Monogram Pictures jungle flick and an Italian zombie movie with quality dubbing."

Mike Roberts has become the regular inker on the book with issue #3.

RUCKBUD

Written by TIM BELL and JIM FORTH; pencilled by JIM FORTH; edited by MARK PANICCIA

32 black-and-white pages; $1.50; from PYRAMID COMICS

Ruckbud is connected to the grim, twenty-minutes-into-the-future world of X-Ray via the fact that while working as an assassin, he mixed X-Ray's father. According to artist Jim Forth, this will almost certainly have a bearing on events in the books forty or fifty minutes into the future.

Right now though, Ruckbud is the leader of a band of mercenaries whose homebase is an island equipped with various hovercrafts and all the comforts of home. At first the book will be humorous in tone, but eventually will concentrate more on character development. —ABC—

RUST

Written by FRED SCHILLER; pencilled by TONY ATKINS; inked, coloured, and edited by CYGNET ASH

24 four-color pages; $1.75; monthly from NOW COMICS

"There's no one named 'Rust' in this book," says series writer Fred Schiller. *Rust* is more of a concept, a state of mind, as it tells the story of Scott Baker, a physically and mentally scarred individual who bleeds acid instead of blood. "This book is about people," says Schiller, "and about how people are changed and affected by being around Scott." Scott Baker becomes closely attached to a seven-year-old child named Cheryl, after she witnesses the death of her mother in issue #4.

Cheryl is actually more traumatized by seeing that murder than is first realized. When Scott lands the lead role in a horror flick titled *Return of the Scabmaster*, the movie's writer, Stephen Kingston, directs Scott and Cheryl to a child psychiatrist named Sarah Radcliffe. Issues #7 and 8 present the battle for Cheryl's mind. Sarah, unable to reach the child, calls in Hemorrhage Head Harry (an old boyfriend) to help. H.H.H. has the unique ability to intrude into other people's dreams, and Cheryl's dreams reveal a hidden, deep-rooted resentment of Scott. She unconsciously (or subconsciously) blames him for the death of her mother.

Despite the fact that Scott is terribly dependent on Cheryl—she has become his reason for living—they eventually go their separate ways. Issues #9, 10 and 11 form a three-part story about the "Circle of Power." Scott is offered the possibility of becoming "normal" if he will perform assassinations for a cultish organization. His assignment is to kill three key people—murderers that will ultimately result in the downfall of known civilization. Scott really doesn't care about the grand scheme of things; he just wants to change so that he can get Cheryl back.

Rust: a state of mind.

Rust receives a pitch-hitter penciller with issue #6 as George Booker, regular artist for the new *Racer X* series, steps in for that issue. —JH—

S

SABLE

Written by MARV WOLFMAN; pencilled by BILL JAASKA; inked by RALPH CABRERA; edited by LAUREL FITCH

32 full-color pages; $1.75; monthly from FIRST COMICS

This new version of Mike Grell's *Jon Sable, Freelance* will tie in to the ABC TV series only a small amount, mainly in the look of Sable's "battle-mask."

Continuing the story begun in issue #1, Sable is in a war-torn Tehran in issue #2, looking for blood. Someone set up his friend to be killed, but the man who did also has connections to Sable's past, and the underground resistance!

In issue #3, back in New York, Jon Sable re-enters a Pentathlon on a job assignment. Can he hack the pressure at his age? And will he be recovered enough to face his competition in "freelancing," in issue #4? The other freelancer will continue to appear in the series, although not necessarily as a friend.

Sable: Realism and a new artist.

Sam and Max, Freelance Police drawing done just for us by Steve Purcell.

Upcoming issues will focus more on Sable's new adventures, and specifically, his relationship with Myke Blackmon, which has been given little play lately.

The *Sable* TV series on ABC will appear on Saturday nights (8 p.m. EST), and premiered on November 7th, replacing *Once a Hero*. By the time you read this, you'll already be familiar with Sable's character on TV, and with his "sidekick" Cheesecake, a blind computer operative. But what will premiere on the series about the time you read this, is the new character of Myke Blackmon! The love triangle between Eden Kendall, Myke Blackmon, and Jon Sable will be played up in the series, as a backdrop to the heavy action orientation. —AM—

SAM AND MAX, FREELANCE POLICE
SPECIAL ROAD-TRIP EDITION

Written and illustrated by STEVE PURCELL

24 black-and-white pages; $1.50; one-shot from FISHWRAP PRODUCTIONS

The *Sam and Max, Freelance Police Special Edition* has been on the stands for several months, reports Fishwrap Productions publisher Steve Moncuse, and Fishwrap is still standing, "so we're going to try it again."

This time Sam and Max head out on a vacation road trip where they encounter:

—motorcycling hooligans,

—a nightmarish entity from Stuckey's,

—and nasty smelling road-pirates who sing rude sea chanteys and swipe manatees from cheezy highway attractions.

"And with any luck," concludes Moncuse, "mobs of angry parents won't throw bricks through our windows, this time."

SAM SLADE, ROBO-HUNTER

Written by ALAN GRANT. Illustrated by IAN GIBSON; edited by BOB KEENAN

32 full-color pages, $1.25 monthly from QUALITY COMICS

Issue *#14* takes us to World Cup Soccer time, with robots fighting for the championship. England has a chance this year, but someone's tampered with star players *Kev*, *Trev* and *Bev*, and they just don't feel like winning any more! This looks like a job for Sam Slade, but unfortunately someone's also hired Joe Kidd to solve the mystery. A goal-oriented tale of transistorized team sport!

In issue *#15*, the second part of "Football Crazy," the once favored British team seems to be out of reach for the world Robo-Soccer Championship Cup. It seems that someone has tampered with their "Let's Win!" circuitry, and the only chance left is to draft Salde, Hoagy and Joe Kidd. Good luck!

Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to issue *#16*. For your dining and dancing pleasure—the scintillating song stylings of Sam Slade. With a song in his heart, and a blaster in his hand, Sam is after the robot-bashing Human League. All this while Brit-Cit starts their National Song Year, causing every bot, droid, and mech to compose their own little ditties! Sammy Cahn, move over! —MSM—

SAMURAI

Written by ROGER CAM. Illustrated by GUANG YAP; edited by MIKE CHABBONNEAU

24 full-color pages, $2.00; monthly from AIRCEL PUBLISHING

The blurb for this new, color ***Samurai*** series reads: "Enter a world filled with action, romance and danger. Enter the world of ***Samurai***!"

As ***Samurai*** shifts from black-and-white to color, the book welcomes a new creative team: writer Roger Cam and artist Guang Yap.

The book will center around Hotachi Kimura, S.P.L.I.N.T.E.R. field operative and clone brother of the late Toshiro Kimura. Hotachi will be a most intriguing character lead, as he has developed a borderline psychotic personality which has been enhanced by a deep-seated hate for what he calls "humans."

His early life abord the *Naganata* has given him a deep resentment towards his clone brother, Toshiro. Toshiro's death, therefore, has had a profound effect upon Hotachi—bringing his personality forward in a way that suggests to S.P.L.I.N.T.E.R. that he might be of use to them.

Unfortunately, Hotachi is a violent and unstable personality and may not be completely controllable. In fact, he may be unable to exercise any restraint when sufficiently angered. Placed in situations where deadly force may be required may void any constraints S.P.L.I.N.T.E.R. might be able to instill within him.

The first three issues of the new ***Samurai*** will go a long way to establishing the volatile and unstable character of Hotachi. In issue *#1*, Hotachi is involved in an international road race while looking for stolen NATO documents. He also encounters Alamut for the first time. Alamut reappears in issue *#2* when Hotachi has a run-in with their South American connection while still recovering from injuries received in the previous issue.

Hotachi travels to Colombia in *#3*, following the trail of the ring. There, he also attempts to shut down Alamut's South American connection.

The nice folks at Aircel are expecting to see the color ***Samurai*** book take the company forward into a future that includes plans for a complete conversion to color in the near future. —SW—

A dramatic sequence by Frank Cirocco from, of all places, ***Samurai Penguin***

SAMURAI PENGUIN

Written by DAN VADO; pencilled by FRANK CIROCCO; inked by CHUCK AUSTEN

24 black-and-white pages, $1.50; bi-monthly from SLAVE LABOR COMICS

Samurai Penguin dies in *#6*. He will be replaced by a new samurai. "What I am doing is showing the origin of a Samurai Penguin without doing an origin issue. Through a number of issues we will be showing the development of a Samurai Penguin and revealing facts about the penguin society," said Dan Vado, writer of the book. The book will begin to take on an environmental theme at about the same time, dealing primarily with the hole in the ozone layer that currently exists in the atmosphere above Antarctica and how the depletion of ozone in general affects the worldwide environment. "This doesn't mean that the book will be moving away from its humorous nature, just that the themes will have a little more meat to them," added Vado.

In an effort to get the book on to a maintainable schedule, the sixth issue has been pushed back to January.

SAMUREE

Written by ELLIOT MAGGIN; pencilled by MARK BEACHUM; inked by IAN AKIN and BRIAN GARVEY

32 full-color pages, $2.00; bi-monthly from CONTINUITY GRAPHICS

Samuree is still hanging around with the Revengers in the current continuity—at least until she finds Dr. Ohura Miller. Her reason for wanting to find Dr. Miller will become chillingly clear, as will her last days on the island of Midduce. Gracie Chu attacks the island's oppressors and is killed. Darryl Shepard/Samuree/Revenger coldly plans the destruction of Aunt Gracie's murderers, and, in a bloodbath that would make Nexus proud, she descends on them like a fox in a hen house.

In present time, battling with terrorist zombies has reached a climax by issue *#6*, which proves unsatisfactory to all parties because the reason for the presence of these horrible creatures was, in the end, for a good cause, the rescue of American diplomatic hostages. Now the Revengers must take on the mission, and truly it is Samuree in *this* story, who gives the name "Revengers" to the team.

SAVAGE HENRY

Written and illustrated by MATT HOWARTH; edited by PATRICIA JERES

32 black-and-white pages, $1.75; bi-monthly from VORTEX COMICS (Mature Readers)

The misadventures of everyone's favorite rock 'n' roller continue. In *#5*, the Bulldaggers continue to have a rough go of life in and around Bugtown. Issue *#6* is called "The Ice Queen's Dream," and is described by Howarth as a "Girl fight issue." It continues Hiroshima's "Nameless Rites Tour" saga. As usual, everyone is dying in Bugtown. In this issue, Bugtown also grows immense crystal teeth. With most of the main characters dead for the moment, the surviving Caroline clone has it out with Hiroshima, hence the "girl fight" moniker.

By *#7*, titled "Breakfast on the Altar," most of the characters are back from the dead, and it's the big wrap-up to the whole Hiroshima to-do. In fact, Henry himself should show up in this issue, a rare occurrence for this title. Howarth promises comic relief and cannibalism, two of *my* favorite things!

Starting with *#8* the book will take a left turn in direction. The stories will be self contained, and "Monkee-ish" in tone. Howarth will also continue to include his music pieces in the back of each issue. Worth its weight in Residents albums! —JW—

SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN

Written by CHUCK DIXON; pencilled by GARY KWAPISZ; inked by ERNIE CHAN (with others contributing to the series from time to time)

64 black-and-white pages, magazine format $2.00; monthly from MARVEL COMICS

Savage Sword of Conan will continue to offer longer, self contained stories in the classic Conan tradition. The magazine format allows more intense stories with a strong emphasis on action.

SAVAGE SWORD OF MIKE

Written and illustrated by MATT HOWARTH; edited by DENNIS PIMPLE

Mark Beachum character sketch of Samuree

One-shot; 32 black-and-white pages; $2.00; from FANDOM HOUSE (Mature Readers)

Remember Mike? He's the ultimate fanboy; he'd probably wet his pants over an X-Men/X-Factor/New Mutants/Fallen Angels/Excalibur/Starjammers/Mary Jane Watson-Parker crossover (What? So would *you?!*) Well, Mike will be receiving the honor of his own special. The book will reprint all three of Howarth's original Mike mini-comics, as well as an all new adventure. In it, Mike becomes a barbarian, armed with a walkman in lieu of a sword. His quest? It is to find the three comics he needs to complete his collection!! The special carries us through the adventures he goes through just to find *one* of them, leaving us open to future sequels. "Matt decided that only a group named 'Fandom House' should publish this comic," says editor Dennis Pimple, "and as usual I plan to oblige him."

"Matt claims that the book reveals his Fellini/Bob Burden side," Pimple continued: "I just publish the stuff, you couldn't pay me enough to *understand* it." Look for it in Spring. —JW—

SCARLET IN GASLIGHT

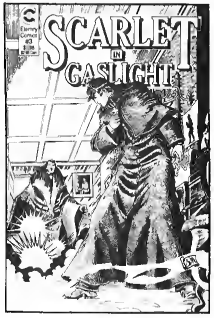
Written by MARTIN POWELL; co-plotted by WAYNE R. SMITH; illustrated by SEPPO MAKINEN

32 black-and-white pages; $1.95; four-issue mini-series; monthly from ETERNITY COMICS

He was a warrior prince who ruled with an iron hand, falling in battle only to rise again as something more than human. Reigning over the other world as he once ruled his own, only a weakness for beauty and passion stand against his iron will. He is the king of his kind. He is Count Dracula.

He possesses the most brilliantly

Holmes meets Drac



Tom Grindberg cover to yet another Quality Comics British series

reasoning mind ever known, the world's first and greatest consulting detective. None knew the private horrors that have shaped him, that have scarred him. Suddenly, his well-ordered world of reason and logic is ripped apart by the reality of the supernatural. He must fight against insanity with his loyal assistant, Watson, to save London. He is Sherlock Holmes.

They meet in an unholy war of bitter conflict and evil irony created by the ruthless intellect of Professor James Moriarty. Only together can Holmes and Dracula bring this monster down.

SCAVENGERS

Written and illustrated by T.B. GROVER and RON SMITH; edited by BOB KEENAN

32 full-color pages, $1.25; monthly from QUALITY COMICS

Some scientists believe that the dinosaurs became extinct as the result of a giant meteor slamming into the Earth and sending tons of dust into the air, blotting out the sun. Others maintain a gigantic volcano did the deed, while still others say it was just evolution. In issue #1, we learn the *real* reason our Pleistocene pals bit the big one. It seems their demise didn't happen as a result of the past, but because of the 23rd century ability to time-travel. It seems meat in the 23rd century is non-existent, and this lust for real meat finds an outlet in catching a few dinosaurs, and bringing them home to barbecue! But this lust seems to work both ways as the dinosaurs are just as delighted to find a new source of protein in their own backyard. I wonder if dinosaurs also taste like chicken. Bart Sears supplied the cover.

In issue #2, we meet Earl Reagan, a cowboy from the 23rd century who hunts dinosaurs for fun and profit. He's also got a 50-foot Tyrannosaur wanting to rip him apart for poking her eye out. Meanwhile, back in the 23rd century, Judge Dredd's got a couple of rogue dinos committing mayhem without a permit.

Cover by Tom Grindberg. —MSM—

SCIMIDAR

Written by R.A. JONES; illustrated by ALBERT VAL

32 black-and-white pages, $1.95; monthly from ETERNITY COMICS (Mature readers)

Debuting in May, *Scimidar* is a science fiction/super-hero series set 20 years in the future. The title character is a beautiful young woman who lives in a world left desolate in the wake of a global economic collapse. A wealthy member of the decadent, privileged segment of society, Scimidar also does duty as a hero for hire. "Her psychic abilities enable her to track anyone," author R.A. Jones said, "but also leave her vulnerable to the effects of the emotions she absorbs from those around her."

The first battle will see Scimidar on the trail of a hired killer, culminating in a bloody battle beneath the streets of New York. That story will also introduce Gitano, an enigmatic gunman who will co-star in the series.

In issues #2-4 Scimidar will travel to Las Vegas where she will face her first arch-villain—an exotic but deadly lady known as Ecstasy. "Once in Vegas," Jones said, "Scimidar will nearly lose herself in the seductive lifestyle of the rich and infamous."

SCOUT: WAR SHAMANS

Written and illustrated by TIM TRUMAN; edited by CAT YRONWODE

32 four-color pages, $1.75; every six weeks from ECLIPSE COMICS

The Saga of Emmanuel Santana, a.k.a. Scout returns in March in *Scout: War Shamans*. *Scout* is planned as a four-part multi-year series, with *Scout* #1-24 being the first part, *Scout: War Shamans* #1-through-only-Tim-knows and followed at some future date by *Scout: Marauder* and *Blue Leader*. If you have not been involved with *Scout* before this could be a good opportunity.

War Shamans begins immediately after *New America* #4, which chronicled the ravages of the 15-year Civil War between the Southwestern Free States and Communist Mexico. The year is 2018. During this time, Scout has disappeared into the canyons of Arizona, gotten married, and had two sons. The new series will focus primarily on Scout's involvement with his sons. In issue #1, Scout must make a crucial decision, whether to keep his sons isolated, or to take them into the world. Instead of bringing the country together, the Civil War has vulcanized it into splintered communities. Rosa Winter who has now emerged as leader uses very questionable means to try to pull things together. Scout and his children will venture from town to town, and

Tim Truman's character sketches for Scout: War Shamans

while there will be the kind of action *Scout* fans are used to, Truman hopes to do a lot of characterization as well, especially in terms of the emotions between a father and his children. Truman has changed his style of artwork over the four-month layoff. Using it to decide where he wanted to be, he expects the visuals to be slower paced and tending towards a more European style.

There will not be backups in the new series, and Tim has hand painted the first full issue, which will have no ads in it. If back-ups do return, they will be a maximum of four pages, which means the lead story will be much longer than the original *Scout* series. *Scout: War Shamans* will also appear every six weeks so that Truman might put more effort into each issue, and it will feature a stiff cover on each issue.

Scout enthusiasts can also look for the first seven issues of the original series to be reprinted together in a deluxe hardcover edition which will sell for $14.95. —ES—

SCRATCH

Written, illustrated and edited by CHARLES TREADWELL

32 black-and-white pages; $1.75; sporadically ("We're shooting for bi-monthly") from OUTSIDE COMICS

The format of *Scratch* will remain the same as in the past. Twenty page lead stories will be backed up by contributions from various creators treating the day-to-day life of the cast members. Most of the stories will be complete in one issue, although Charles Treadwell feels that a two parter could appear once or twice a year.

Future issues will tell how Scratch first met Doctor Rex, and what the demon's relationship is to others of his ilk. The Council, an authoritative body first touched on in *Scratch* #2 and which had a hand in the disappearance of the dinosaurs (as revealed in the eighth issue), has plans for humanity which will be become clearer in upcoming stories. Kidmund's strangely prophetic dreams tie directly into those plans.

One story planned for an upcoming issue is by Dave Mitchell. "The Werewolves of Longwood" is a laid-back sequel to #6. "It's another Lucy story," says Treadwell, "Although Sarcophakus won't be in that one." Neal Davies, Dave Matthews and Jim Donato will be contributing more work. Donato's inside front cover "Pervertisements," which heretofore had been unconnected, will take on more of the flavor of a Sunday funnies serial. "Scratch has trouble walking off the set of one of the commercials," says Treadwell, "It turns out there're demonic forces in charge of the agency doing those 'King of Hell Coffee,' etc. ads."

Besides *Scratch*, Outside Comics has done storyboards for a couple of movies. *Before God* is, according to Treadwell, "a weird sort of science fantasy, a speculative piece on how the concept of God came about." *Forever Alice*, so far unproduced, is another story they've been retained to storyboard. "It sounds better than saying we're keeping our day jobs."

About his inability to guarantee a regular schedule, Treadwell says, "There is a lot of instability in the market now and there will continue to be for awhile—where small publishing is concerned. This is because the independent black-and-white book is still relatively new, and publishers and distributors have not really come to terms on an efficient means to promote these books. Right now the distributors yell at the publishers for not releasing books on time, and the publishers yell at the distributors for not paying—and for going out of business.

Probably some sort of compromise is going to be reached, I think, where it will be understood that these books are not regular Marvels. They just can't be. There aren't enough people and there isn't enough money for them to come out once every 30 days and be good."

You don't think it'll turn into a situation where the distributors say they'll only buy Marvels and DCs?

"I don't think so. I imagine a couple of them might like to, but I think in the long run they'll realize it's inadvisable, because Marvel and DC—once that takes place—will get lazier, and once they let their standards slip down into the gutter, their books will cease to move as well. Did you notice that when the black-and-white glut started, that's when Marvel and DC did their best stuff ever?

"I think a state of peaceful coexistence will develop, but it'll take about a year." —EV—

SEA OF BLOOD

Written by SPENCER OF WOODCOCK; illustrated by DENNY OF DERBYSHIRE

24 black-and-white pages, $1.95; bi-monthly from HARRIER COMICS

Avast here, shiver me timbers and splice the mainbrace, Jim lad. What has we here, then? A pirate saga, that's what, me hearties.

That's one common perception of piracy, and the other is the clean cut swashbuckling Douglas Fairbanks legend created by Hollywood. Writer Spencer Woodcock hopes to eschew both by presenting a title that's accurately researched both historically and socially. The reality will differ considerable from the celluloid.

The Treaty of Utrecht in 1713 effectively outlawed the patronage of piracy by the European powers, ensuring that future pirates were careerists. Shortly thereafter a pirate community of sorts was established in the Caribbean at New Providence, providing a haven for those in the trade and the most notorious night-life around at the times.

The series is narrated from an unspecified time in the future by one Silas Sharrock, one of three main protagonists. Foremost in terms of an evil nature is Ferret Frost, characterized by Woodcock as "a balding vindictive psychopath with a sort of diabolical calculating intelligence capable of making Machiavelli look like a social worker." Frost's excesses are occasionally tempered by the one man he considers a friend, Big Bob Bone. Bone is quite content to make his living from piracy and capable of killing when required, but he derives no pleasure from the act. Sharrock is also without morality, but looks up to Frost as a master of deceit. Cowardly but with a marksman's prowess when using a pistol Sharrock also harbours a thick streak of self-indulgence.

In the first issue the trio are taken aboard a shark-fishing vessel captained

by an outwardly traditional man who is later revealed to be completely insane and driven by visions of the apocalypse. It's no surprise to learn, then, that a mutiny is the major event of the following issue. —FPI—

SECRET ORIGINS

Written and illustrated by VARIOUS; edited by MARK WAID and ROY THOMAS

48 four-color pages, $1.25; newsstand distribution; monthly from DC COMICS INC.

The Legion of Super-heroes celebrates its 30th anniversary in issue #25 of this showcase title for DC's secret origins in a special giant-sized tale by Paul Levitz, Rick Stasi, and Dick Giordano, which will of course include many new facts. The Golden Age Atom appears courtesy of Roy Thomas, Mike Clark, and Bob Downs in the second story. The cover is by Curt Swan and Murphy Anderson.

Under a Kevin Nowlan cover in #26, Black Lightning zaps his story into our minds as revealed by Tony Isabella and Greg Brooks, and his fate after the *Outsiders*' cancellation is told. Miss America stands proud in her tale by Roy Thomas and Grant Miehm, in a story which is promised to have great future implications in upcoming *Infinity, Inc.* issues.

Magically appearing, issue #27 will feature an extra-length Zatanna story by R.J.M. Lofficier, Robert Loren Fleming, and Tom Artis, in which the scintillating sorceress will get a new costume, "very similar to her old one," says editor Mark Waid. "No fishnet stockings, though." Zatara, Zatanna's father appears in the back, in a story by Roy Thomas, Grant Miehm, and Fred Fredericks.

Darkening the horizon is #28's origin of Nightshade by Bob Greenberger and Rob Liefeld. This story promises to set up plotlines in both *Suicide Squad* and *Captain Atom*, and readers are advised to see the entries for both. Then, the clock strikes Midnite, and old Quality Comics character, in a story by Roy Thomas and an undecided on artist.

Stretching into home base will be issue #29's special "stretchable sleuth" issue. First, the Elongated Man celebrates his 30th anniversary and goes back to his old home town. Wally West (Flash) guest-stars in this story by Gerard Jones, Ty Templeton, and Grant Miehm. Plastic Man gets doused again by Roy Thomas and Michael T. Gilbert in this issue's back-up story.

Issue #30 will contain the "new, revised" origin of Aquaman, as told by Keith Giffen, Robert Loren Fleming, and Curt Swan. "A lot of new stuff gets revealed," says editor Mark Waid. This story will lead into the *Aquaman* series by the same creative team. And The Ray shines for the first time in his origin issue by Roy Thomas and Gil Kane.

Returning this year as a throwback to the days when comics were big, the new *Secret Origins Annual* (#2) will be a full 80 pages of excitement! First, Keith Giffen, Peter David, and Eric Shanower reveal the secrets behind the Justice League of America, from its first battle to its current incarnation. Then, the Justice Society of America gets together in a story by Roy Thomas and Mike Baird. Both stories run 38 pages apiece. And a special eight-page back-up feature will tell the complete post-*Crisis* rundown of all of the JLA/JSA team-ups. AS WE GO TO PRESS: The contents of the Annual have been changed. Stay tuned. —AM—

Secret Origins covers the Justice League of America/International, as drawn by Eric (Oz) Shanower.

SGT. ROCK

Written by ROBERT KANIGHER; illustrated by THE KUBERT FAMILY; edited by MURRAY BOLTINOFF

32 four-color pages, 75 cents; newsstand distribution; bi-monthly then quarterly from DC COMICS INC.

After one of the longest military careers in comics history, Sgt. Rock is returning from the active roster—and #422, the last all-new issue, will feature a special story illustrated by Joe, Adam, and Andy Kubert—the whole Kubert family. After that, the title goes quarterly and will content itself with presenting classic stories by creators Robert Kanigher and Joe Kubert. —PC—

SGT. STRIKE MEETS STRIKE SPECIAL

Written by CHUCK DIXON; illustrated by TOM LYLE; edited by FRED BURKE

one-shot; 32 four-color pages; $1.95; from ECLIPSE COMICS COMICS

This story, which takes place in 1988, concerns the first meeting of the Golden Age Sgt. Strike and Strike, the man who has adopted the costume and the identity of the original. Writer Chuck Dixon laughingly refers to this as the culmination of the longest origin story in the world. In the story, much of the secret behind the power harness is revealed, and we will discover that there are alien origins behind it. Readers of *Strike!* know that Dennis, the current Strike, found the costume and power harness in his mother's attic, and has assumed the position, as it were, and yet he does not know anything about the whereabouts of the original owner, Sgt. Strike. This story will go a long way to clearing that up as Sgt. Strike returns to confront his heir apparent. It will also answer several other question that have been bothering readers, such as just where has Sgt. Strike been all this time.

Sgt. Strike Meets Strike Special comes out between #5 and 6 of *Strike!* —ES—

THE SHADOW

Written by ANDREW HELFER; illustrated by KYLE BAKER; edited by MIKE CARLIN

32 four-color pages, $1.75; monthly from DC COMICS INC.

The first issue of *The Shadow* for 1988 will be #10, and it will be the third issue of "The Seven Deadly Finns" storyline. (Which is also the title of a song by Brian Eno, incidentally.) As regulars know, *The Shadow* is written in mini-series form within the regular numbering. This five-part story is about a New York City organized crime family named Finn, and the Shadow's attempt to destroy them all, and their attempts to fight back. In #10, one of the Finns decides to break out many of the city's most dangerous lunatics to fight the Shadow. In #11, the Shadow must destroy this team of psychopaths, and then he concentrates on the Finns themselves. At the end of this (#12), a most unexpected development happens to The Shadow, and it will set the stage for the next several months of *Shadow* stories.

Immediately following this issue, *The Shadow Annual* will take place, and it will be a direct reflection on the event which takes place at the end of the previous storyline. After the *Annual*, starting in issue #13, the next block of stories features the Shadow's agents in action without his participation. In their master's absence, they continue to battle, and continue his legend. Concurrent with this, the sons of the Shadow regretfully travel to Shamballah to deliver a most unusual burden.

Writer Andy Helfer tells us that as of "The Seven Deadly Finns" storyline, the book will be more linear, and easier to follow, and that new artist Kyle Baker is the most phenomenal find since Kevin Maguire (of *Justice League* fame). Editor Mike Carlin says that the fear is that people will leave the book now that Bill Sienkiewicz is off of it, but he feels that it is as strong as ever. "DC is very impressed with what Kyle has turned in so far," says Carlin, "and the time to look at his stuff is now, instead of having to pay back issue prices in a couple of months." Helfer also wants to assure the readers that despite Marvel's one-shot *Shadow* special, DC has the exclusive license to The Shadow at this point.

Andy, I hope I told as much as I could without giving away the secret of the storyline. —ES—

THE SILENT INVASION

Written by LARRY HANCOCK and MICHAEL CHERKAS; illustrated by MICHAEL CHERKAS

32 black-and-white pages, $2.00; bi-monthly from RENEGADE PRESS

Fear not, the paranoia ends with issue #12—for some. In talking with publisher Deni Loubert—even under pain of alien torture—she could not give away any of the finale. "It's a *mystery!*" she said, "we don't want to give it away."

"The story ends on a note most people won't expect," she offered. "It will wrap everything up." And yet, she implied, it will leave you with one of those classic feelings of maybe, just maybe, it didn't *really* end.

She continued, "It will be a *definite* end for all the major characters." However, for some of the minor characters, some of the people that have been on the fringes... that's another thing entirely. And therein lies two upcoming spin off series (sure to be in the next *Preview Special*, but here's a bit about them I was able to cajole from Deni).

The first will be *Suburban Nightmares*, which has been the back-up feature in some of *The Silent Invasion*. It will also be set in the '50s and will deal with the subject of paranoia. But instead of aliens (which I always thought, like *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*, was a metaphor for communist paranoia—still frighteningly prevalent today, but hopefully not after 1988's elections), it will focus directly on said red scare. Larry Hancock will be the writer and Michael Cherkas will be designing the book with an as yet undecided artist. It will be a four-issue black-and-white monthly mini-series, tentatively scheduled to begin this coming June, and will sell for $2.00.

The second spin-off is called *The New Frontier*. Cherkas will be co-creating, plotting an laying out the book with new artist John Sablic. While the ideas are still in the zygote stage at the time of this writing, Loubert said the book would probably feature the some of the familiar characters at a later date. Sort of a where are they now (*then?* since it's still set in the '50s), but with a new direction. —KD—

SILVER SURFER

Written by STEVE ENGLEHART; pencilled by UNDETERMINED; inked by JOSEF RUBINSTEIN; edited by MIKE HIGGINS

32 four-color pages, 75 cents; newsstand distribution; monthly from MARVEL COMICS GROUP

Following #10's wrap-up to the Kree-Skrull war... or rather, the Surfer's involvement in it... Englehart has planned a series of shorter stories to compensate for the multi-issue plotline that began the series.

The chief component of the shorter series will be what Englehart calls "the Sargasso Sea of Space" and the last remaining member of a species called Sauronithoides, a dinosaur on the way to intelligence. One of these creatures, apparently has been living in outer space as a villain, and he and the Surfer will lock horns for at least two issues.

Following that, the next multi-part epic will start up, beginning with the Surfer's entrance into a black hole. Why does the Surfer go into a black hole, you ask? Because he's on a quest. What quest, you ask? Englehart wouldn't tell us. But it's important. Englehart claims it will "radically shake up the Marvel Universe as we know it." During this sequence, a major new villain will be introduced, whom Englehart claims is "worse than the Beyonder" in terms of power.

The Surfer's love-life will also take a different turn during the next few months. Mantis, we're told, will be dead soon, and Shalla Bal will likewise be out of the picture. In fact, the next lady in the Surfer's life will be Nova, current Herald of Galactus. She and the Surfer will be "hanging out" for a while, trading viewpoints on what it's like to be the herald of someone like Galactus, and, yes, folks, the Big G will be around for a while as well. One thing Englehart wants to do with Nova is to explore the reasons why she chose to be a herald of Galactus, and why she still talks like someone from Brooklyn even after becoming cosmic. (I'm not making this up!) Englehart also plans to examine the two different methods of our two heralds in finding planets for Galactus to consume, and why they contrast so sharply. —DP—

SILVERBLADE

Written by CARY BATES; pencilled by GENE COLAN; inked by STEVE MITCHELL; edited by DENNIS O'NEIL

12-issue maxi-series, 32 four-color pages, $1.25; monthly from DC COMICS INC.

Editor Denny O'Neil's recent plotting dinner with scripter Cary Bates was interrupted by a startling development. "When Cary told me what he has come up with for *Silverblade #9*," O'Neil recalls, "I dropped my fork!"

"It is all quite logical, and I guarantee that it will be the major surprise of the year in comics."

In case you haven't been reading *Silverblade*, the story of a retired cinema star who is endowed with the ability to actually become any of his past film characters, perhaps #9 is a good place to start. That issue utterly changes the direction of the series, shifting it into an unexpectedly different tangent that will

resolve itself in Silverblade's twelfth and concluding issue.

O'Neil adds that *Silverblade* has evolved into a project quite far removed from its original concept. The story has grown into a multi-layered epic, as Cary Bates has added both researched material and personal experiences into the series. "After issue nine, you'll want to re-read the earlier book," suggests the editor. "It reads like a Philip K. Dick novel."

Bates's recent resurgence as a writer has not gone unnoticed by O'Neil, who states that "Cary is showing us that he's got a lot of moves that nobody's ever seen before. For 20 years, he delivered what he was asked to deliver (Superman and Flash adventures), which is the definition of being a professional. Nobody ever asked him to stretch his talents, so he didn't.

"Now we're asking him to show us what he can do — and he *is*!" —ME—

Another great "it's the last ..." caption from a villain! Silverhawks.

SILVERHAWKS

Written by STEVE PERRY; pencilled by MIKE WITHERBY; inked by FRED FREDERICKS; edited by DON DALEY

32 four-color pages; $1.00; newsstand distribution; bi-monthly from MARVEL COMICS GROUP

Marvel continues to chronicle the adventures of the *Silverhawks*. Writer Steve Perry was one of the original developers of the concept for syndicated TV, and joining newcomer Mike Witherby is inker and *Mandrake* veteran Fred Fredericks.

SINISTER ROMANCE

Written and illustrated by GLENN DAKIN, TREVS PHOENIX and WARREN FLECE; edited by MARTIN LOCK

one-shot; 24 black-and-white pages; $1.95; from HARRIER COMICS

Conceived as a pastiche, *Sinister Romance* appears in March with three eight-page stories written and drawn by the individual contributors.

Dakin produces *Paris, Man of Plaster* for Harrier and is a regular contributor to *Escape* and *Gag!*, and has provided a story about an ancient Egyptian princess who returns to life in the 20th century, but in order to retain life she must entrap the super-hero who loves her and leech his power.

Phoenix and Flece also contribute to *Escape* and the former's story details an unconventional marriage that takes a turn for the worse when the bride discovers her husband is a gangster and not the man she thought he was. But then neither is she the woman he believes her to be.

Flece provides the story of a socially retarded stage magician who falls afoul of the Magic Rectangle when he uses real magic in inducing a waitress to fall in love with him.

Sinister Romance is introduced as a one-shot, but as is always the case, should it prove popular beyond expectation a regular series will be on the way. —FH—

SINNER

Written by CARLOS SAMPAYO; illustrated by JOSE MUNOZ; edited by KIM THOMPSON

32-40 black-and-white pages; $2.95; bi-monthly from FANTAGRAPHICS BOOKS

The third issue of *Sinner*, scheduled for March release, reprints the second Alack Sinner adventure, "The Fillmore Case." It details dirty doings in a retirement home. Since the story is only 18 pages long, there will be a back-up by the Jose Munoz/Carlos Sampayo team, from their recent *Sudor Sudaca* series.

"People may be confused by the abrupt shift in styles from the first two Sinner stories we printed—in *Sinner #1* and *Prime Cuts #4*—and the next couple of issues," editor Kim Thompson points out. "The fact is, the stories in #2 and 3 are first two written and drawn, while the others are more recent; we're just re-establishing the chronology in the character's life." Thompson points out that these early stories are less stylistically distinctive than the later ones, but emphasizes that "around *Sinner #4*, which is a 40-page story called 'Viet Blues,' the Munoz/Sampayo team reaches its cruising speed."

Readers will get an idea of the duo's most recent work (which Thompson calls "some of the most *extreme* cartooning I've ever seen") both in the *Sudor Sudaca* series, which will appear occasionally in *Sinner* to fill pages left open by the changing page lengths of *Sinner* stories, and in the upcoming *Sinner* graphic novel, *Nicaragua*, which will collect the most recent *Sinner* sequence into a 72-page book [*see the Fantagraphics Books graphic novels section for details*].

Munoz/Sampayo fans should also check out the Catalan Communications book roster, which includes the already-published *Joe's Bar* and the upcoming *Sophie Comics*. —JC—

Good morning, Alack—a page from Sinner.

SKYWOLF

Written by CHUCK DIXON; pencilled by TOM LYLE; edited by CAT YRONWODE

3-issue limited series; 32 four-color pages; $1.75; monthly from ECLIPSE COMICS

The third week of March, look for the *Skywolf* mini-series, which continues the events which take place immediately after the Skywolf story in *Airboy #37*. In that storyline Sky had married Riot O'Hara, and they had tried to adjust to the easy life of a split level home in Glendale. Unfortunately tragedy has struck, which editor cat yronwode assures us is not in the form of a super-villain pushing Riot off of a bridge, and Skywolf is off again on another adventure. "It is at one point expected, and at another unexpected," she says tongue in cheek.

The story takes place in Mexico and French Indochina (now Vietnam). Chuck Dixon's storyline is as usual an all-out action tale and involves the French Foreign Legion, and Skywolf's enemy, Baron Von Tundra, who has joined the Legion. The time is the late '50s, when, during the famous battle of Dien Bien Phu, 13,000 French soldiers held off 100,000 Vietnamese rebels, and Skywolf and Bald Eagle are right in the middle of it. Writer Chuck Dixon says the story gets pretty murky as it looks in some of the politics and some of what was to come in this area. Sky is also struggling with his own personal life at this point, as well, and he becomes very scarred by the events of this story. "The mini-series," says yronwode, "goes a long way to show what has made Sky such an embittered old cynic on life."

Artwork is by Tom Lyle, Dixon's colleague on *Strike!*, who has tackled Skywolf before. —ES—

SLAINE THE BERSERKER

Written by ALVIN GUANT; illustrated by M. BERLARDINELLI; edited by BOB KEENAN

32 full-color pages; $1.25; monthly from QUALITY COMICS

In issue #7, things go from strange to stranger on prehistoric Earth. Science now blends with magic as Earth becomes the battle stage for aliens, demons and extra-terrestrials. Where does Slaine fit in? Story and art by Pat Mills and Glenn Fabry. Also, Gladiator Black Hawk attempts to escape his Alien masters and leave the killing arena.

Issue #8 takes us to an ancient time when barbarians fight to master the land, but alien Time Lords fight for the mastery of the Earth! Between these two fun-loving groups stands *Slaine the Berserker*, the one who hold the key to it all. Who will he side with? Science fiction and sorcery by Pat Mills and David Pugh. Also, yet another adventure of Black Hawk, our favorite nubian warrior from the time of Caesar, who has been teleported to amuse his masters from another galaxy.

Things go from strange to stranger.

In issue #9, the elemental Elfric lays waste to Slaine's Celtic warriors, until Slaine himself joins the battle, using the power of the dreaded "Warp Spasm." Could even this strange blood lust be enough to stop an Elemental? This issue also includes an Alan Moore tale of too-safe safeguards and yet another installment of Black Hawk by Guant and Belardinelli. Fun for the whole family. —MSM—

SLEDGE HAMMER!

Written by JIM SALICRUP; pencilled by ALEX SAVIUK; inked by SAM De La ROSA; edited by DON DALEY

32 four-color pages; $1.00; two-issue limited series; bi-monthly from MARVEL COMICS GROUP

ABC-TV's hilarious sendup of Dirty Harry returns to the stands in *Sledge Hammer! #2*, on sale in early 1988.

In this second issue, an investigation into police corruption causes the police force to take Sledge's beloved gun away from him and replace it with a smaller weapon. Captain Trunk, who has never been enamored with Hammer's devil-may-care law enforcement tactics, is demoted and forced to work as Sledge's partner. The pair reluctantly teams up to locate the missing Lt. Dorreau, Sledge's regular partner, in this parody of *Lethal Weapon* and other "buddy/cop" movies.

Sledge Hammer! is a property of New World Pictures, the same corporation that purchased Marvel Comics last year.

Editor Daley states that this two-issue limited series is Marvel's way of "testing the water" to see if a regular *Sledge Hammer!* comic is viable. "We really became interested in the project after the TV show survived its first season ratings war against Cosby. Maybe *Sledge Hammer!* has legs!"

Funny, I always thought that Sledge's partner Dorreau was the one with legs! —ME—

THE SNAKE

Written by DAVE DARRIGO; illustrated by RON HOBBS and PETER HSU

one-shot; 48 black-and-white pages; magazine size; $2.95; from DRAGON LADY PRESS (Mature Readers)

"There's more to *The Snake* than meets the eye," says creator Dave Darrigo.

"Suffice to say, if you like classic crime-fighters such as The Shadow, The Spider, or the Green Hornet—or, if comic characters (who I call the 'suit-

The Snake, a classic crimefighter.

and-tie saviors') like the Spirit, Mr. A and the Question (Ditko version) appeal to you, then you'll enjoy The Snake.

"Ron Hobbs and I have studied recent attempts at creating the classic mystery-man heroes (such as *Street Wolf*, *Twilight Avenger*, *The Prowler*, *The Face*, etc.) and we think *The Snake* will out-do them in portraying the gritty, 'street level' feel of the 'urban jungle'.

"Hobbs is doing the art with gray markers and a brushed wash effect that will give the book a photo-realistic quality.

"The story—entitled 'The Den of Madame Joy'—has The Snake battling a street gang, and a modern Dragon Lady, who have invaded his jealously protected turf."

(Peter Hsu is doing three interior pages of the story. It's a flashback-origin sequence. Hsu is also assisting Hobbs on other pages.)

SOLO AVENGERS

Written by TOM DeFALCO and VARIOUS; pencilled by MARK BRIGHT and VARIOUS; inked by JOE RUBINSTEIN and VARIOUS; edited by MARK GRUENWALD

32 four-color pages; 75 cents; newsstand distribution; monthly from MARVEL COMICS GROUP

Hawkeye continues his solo adventures with the emphasis on fast action and a wide variety of unusual locales and guest stars, including the Silver Sable and the Sandman (last seen in *The Amazing Spider-Man*).

The second feature in the book stars anyone who has ever been an Avenger, in solo action produced by some of the top writers and artists in comics. Some of the tales in the works are:

Black Widow, by Bob Layton and Jackson Guice.

Black Panther, by Sandy Plunkett and Stan Drake.

She Hulk, by Chris Claremont, Alan Davis and Paul Neary.

Sub-Mariner, by Fabian Nicieza, Kevin Maguire and Joe Rubinstein.

Hellcat, by J.M. DeMatteis, June Brigman and Stan Drake.

THE SOLTHENIS

Written by RICHARD PIERS RAYNER; illustrated by VINCENT DANKS

12 issue limited series; 32 black-and-white pages; price UNDETERMINED; bi-monthly from THE ROGUES GALLERY

Published in the autumn of 1987 in the U.K., *The Solthenis* is to be re-launched for the USA early in 1988.

The saga of *The Solthenis* is an epic spanning time, space, and, if current plans come to fruition, three 12-issue maxi-series. The Solthenis itself is a vast celestial body in space through which twelve civilized worlds pass during their rotation. It's a source of power that can be used constructively or abused, and the majority of Earth's myths have occurred during periods in which the planet has been immersed in the Solthenis.

The Earth portrayed in the title is similar to ours geographically, but previous passes through the Solthenis have resulted in political differences, with the United States losing the War of Independence, and the remainder of the globe gradually uniting under a world government run from London. By 1990 the Earth is once again due to enter the Solthenis, and some people are aware of the opportunities soon to be available (particularly an unscrupulous politician named Geoffrey Willmott), but the majority ignorant. However, some are already affected by the power, including the brother of the world government president.

Rayner intends to mix the depiction of Earth with stories of other civilizations as they pass through the Solthenis, all of which will tie in to the main plot.

—FFI—

SONIC DISRUPTORS

Written by MIKE BARON; pencilled by BARRY CLAIRE; inked by JOHN NYBERG; edited by MIKE GOLD

12-issue maxi-series; 32 full-color pages; $1.75; monthly from DC COMICS, INC.

DC's marriage of rock 'n' roll and comics cranks up the volume and jams into 1988.

Writer/creator Mike Baron promises to explore what "normal" American life is like in this militaristic state where rock is outlawed and the government (along with right-wing fundamentalist preachers) totally manipulates its people.

In *Sonic Disruptors #4*, Kate Straight visits her parents in Bakersfield, California. "We get a glimpse of what life is like for people who aren't trouble-shooters," Baron explains. Kate's parents lead a "mundane existence. They eat government-approved foods and watch government-approved entertainment."

Issue #5 features "Gross Out," a "battle of the bands" story. "It's based on a real incident when the Mothers of Invention got on stage with the Fugs and tried to gross them out through their music and by biting the heads off of bats," Baron says.

When asked to summarize the events of subsequent issues, Baron mentions that he doesn't write *Sonic Disruptors* very far in advance. "When it's time to write an issue, I clear my brain and just sit down and do it!"

Although specifics could not be cited, future plot lines in *Sonic Disruptors* will include the examination of Sheik Rattle Enroll and other characters, a vicious guerrilla war that is taking place on Earth, and looks at various rock 'n' roll legends and myths. The series is also headed for a revolution, where various rock-rooted cultures may be forced to join forces. "A theme I'm working with here is the importance of compromise and conciliation," Baron adds, "because all of these disparate groups have to get together in order to get those military parasites off of the United States' back!"

—ME—

SOUTHERN KNIGHTS

Written by HENRY VOGEL; pencilled by MARK LAMPERT; edited by DWIGHT JON ZIMMERMAN

32 black-and-white pages; $1.75; bi-monthly from COMICS INTERVIEW PUBLICATIONS

A very special event will soon occur in the sequence of events that is *The Southern Knights*. It will soon achieve a status that few other black-and-white comics have reached—issue #25. In all of the time that independent black-and-white comics have been published only three others reached their 25th issue: they have been *Cerebus* (beyond #100 by now), *Journey* (#27), and *First Kingdom* (which ended with #26).

(Honorable mention goes to Fantagraphics' own *Love & Rockets* which is also hovering close to the quarter-centennial milemarker.) "It's only a matter of shipping schedule at this point as to which comic reaches #25 first," *Southern Knights* writer Henry Vogel stated. "I think we've got the edge, but if they should ship early and we ship late, they'll be number five, and *Southern Knights* will be sixth. Naturally, I'm betting on my book."

To celebrate the event, *Southern Knights* will serve up a (surprise) regular-sized issue. However, the issue—according to Vogel—will be jam-packed with virtually everyone who ever appeared in the *Southern Knights* comic. These people will include (but will not necessarily be limited to) the Southern Knights ('natch), Serpent, Synergy, Karl and Larry, Zepher Flint and Jim Bond, Viper, Aliens (lots of 'em), Brian—the Knights' housekeeper—in a power suit, Kassan, a gateway to different planets, and the invasion of Earth. The art on this issue will be handled by Willie Peepers (*Dragon* mini-series, and *Southern Knights* #17-18).

This story will be the culmination of events which have occurred in issues #22-23, and will tie up some major storylines.

Then, in issue #26, Vogel will respond to a question put to him some time ago by a fan. This issue will be, according to Vogel, a "fun" issue, and will be pencilled by Chuck Wojtkiewicz (issues 5-11). In issue #1, the Knights (and their comic) were called the Crusaders. Both were changed with issue #2 due to another group existing with that name. Well, in this issue we finally get to meet The Crusaders, a New York based group of heroes.

It seems that the Crusaders have formed a West Coast branch of their team, and are now looking for a Southern branch. On the surface, their offer seems legit, but as the story progresses, we discover that the Crusaders are a bunch of aging heroes who have been recently pushed out of the headlines by this bunch of upstarts from the South. As a result, the sales of their licensed comic book and action figures have fallen off. The Crusaders have shrewdly figured out that if the headline-grabbing Southern Knights were to become a Crusader Jr. team, all future rights to a Knights comic would become Crusader property.

The Crusaders consist of the Crimson Crusader (an aging ultra-patriot-type), Bull (big and strong—not stupid, but chauvinistic), Grey Wolf (the loner of the group), and Tank (who, as the son of the original Tank has inherited his father's armor). One of Tank's drawbacks is that while his armor was the cutting edge of technology in the '50s and '60s it was never upgraded to the hi-tech '80s. Apparently the original Tank died before having integrated the suit with microchips. Since the suit is powered by tubes, it is not only huge, it is equally cumbersome, and tends to overheat (and must be warmed up when turned on). The son, while an excellent repairman, is unable to improve on his father's original design, so must muddle along as best he can in this powerful, but hopelessly outdated suit. The group is rounded out by Quarterflash (a speedster who can also fly), and Psyclops (a woman who issues a psychic blast from the center of her forehead).

Thus to set up a meeting, the Crusaders do what all super-heroes do when they meet for the first time—they challenge the Knights to a fight. The main thrust of the story is how the Knights reject this offer out of hand, and the Crusaders then react to this refusal.

Issues #27-28 will feature three concurrent stories. The first of these will showcase Kristin and Connie as Connie confronts problems she had with her parents while growing up, and how she was neglected as a kid. Here she must come to grips with her past, and learn to live with it as the pair travel to Boston. Storyline #2 features Dragon and Serpent as they set off to explore what the future has in store for them. This leaves Electrode to patrol Atlanta solo (and the third story).

Issue #27 ends with a surprising twist as Electro must deal rather drastically with a psychotic gunman randomly killing people on the streets of the city. This story spills over into the next issue as the city reacts to Electrode's solution (needless to say their reaction isn't a favorable one). Vogel didn't reveal much of this story, except to say that it would be very interesting.

—RJS—

SPACE ARK

Created by KEN MITCHRONEY; written by KEN MITCHRONEY and MARK CANTRELL; pencilled by KEN MITCHRONEY; inked by VARIOUS; edited by HILARY HUGHES

28 black-and-white pages; $1.75; bi-monthly from APPLE COMICS

According to Ken Mitchroney, the concept of *Space Ark* began a good five years ago, when the notion of a funny animal comic was an original idea, before the appearance of *Radioactive Nostril Picking Mutants*. The early issues will contain both reprints and expansions of material first published by Americomics. The entire series will live or die according to Mitchroney's credo of "Comedy that sticks to the roof of your mind."

Or, if I may rephrase in a way that makes sense to those of us among the less surreally oriented in the audience, this is a funny animal book in the tradition of Bullwinkle and other Jay Ward characters. Mitchroney doesn't think people are interested in "Bugs Bunny doing morality plays or Daffy Duck wandering around doing crazy sex scenes" (I don't see why not). So these adventures of Captain Stone, Ensign Barker, Dr. Hoot, Science Officer, et al. will have them set on missions and through luck and faith and sheer stupidity triumph so spectacularly, they'll get commendations. Behavior like this, you'll remember, led directly to the Contragate scandal, so we'll see just how long this ban on morality plays lasts.

Every fifth issue or so will be written by a well-known writer associated with another field. As a matter of fact, #5 will be written by none other than the legendary, the famous, the young, the restless (a flurry of trumpets and a roll of timpani, please) *"STEVE BOYETTE!"*, author of *Ariel* and *Architect of Sleep*. Issue #10 will be written by that scary fellow, David Scowl, justly renowned for his horror stories of pimps and graveyards, in addition to his essential *Outer Limits: The Official Companion*, a title many have proclaimed so appropriately suitable to him.

Space Ark fans will have a number of treats in store for them, including a fan club now in the preliminary stages of being organized, the possibility of animation rights being sold, and the sale of cassettes containing sound effects for the books. If Ken and his crew triumph half as spectacularly as the crew of *Space Ark*, then a good time will be had by all.

—ABC—

SPACE BEAVER

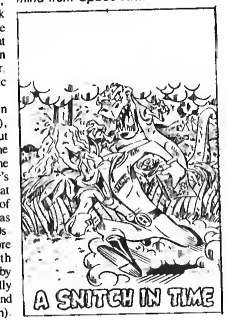
Written and illustrated by DARICK ROBERTSON; edited by TIBOR SARDY

32 black-and-white pages; $1.50; quarterly from TEN-BUCK COMICS

Space Beaver is one of those comics that inspires questions of, "Why is this a funny-animal comic? The action is grim enough and the characterizations show enough human interest that it ought to have realistic human characters rather than a funny-animal cast." Well, the artist can draw it the way that he wants to, and that way has been winning *Space Beaver* a growing number of readers.

Beave's world had a normal Earth-like society until about three years ago before the beginning of the story, when Pork, a ruthless businessman, developed a

The Solthenis: an epic spanning time and space



super-drug called Optimum. Before anyone realized what was happening, half the planet was addicted to it and Pork was too rich and powerful for the government to stop. Now he is Lord Pork, the virtual ruler of the world, reigning from a luxurious orbiting space cruiser. The only thorn in his side is a young guerrilla fighter, the self-proclaimed "Space Beaver," who has seen his best friend die of an Optimum overdose and has vowed to destroy Pork and his Foxx army of drug pushers and enforcers. Pork is determined to stamp out Beave and his tiny resistance team before they grow from a petty annoyance into serious threat.

Issue #7, "Pork Rules," on sale around the beginning of 1988, is a change-of-pace issue. It depicts a single day in the life of Lord Pork. Beave's only appearance is in a nightmare which Pork has. We will see how Pork may rule the planet, but at the same time he has made himself a prisoner in his own orbital fortress. The main characters in this issue are Pork and Stinger, the hired killer who has come to regret having put himself on Pork's payroll. "This issue will have important connotations towards future dissension between Pork and Stinger," co-publisher Rob Read says. "It will also introduce an important problem that will develop in Beave's life..." This story is written by Ten-Buck Comics's editor, Tibor Sardy, and co-written and drawn by ***Space Beaver***'s creator, Darick Robertson.

In #8, "Walkout to Winter," on sale in March, "As the cold season overtakes the nature zone, Beave is saddened by the mess his life has become over the past three years and especially on this day, which is Mickey's (Tog's dead son) birthdate. He takes a walk in the snow and does some soul-searching as he recollects some of the times he had with his now-deceased best friend. This will go back into Beave's younger days, and show scenes of Beave before he was Space Beaver, and dealing with everyday problems."

—PPo—

Space Beavers galore

SPACED

Written and illustrated by TOM STAZER

32 black-and-white pages, $2.00; bi-monthly from UNBRIDLED AMBITION

The 13th issue, on sale in early January, completes *Spaced: Book One*. Lip and Barbara make good their escape from the production of *The Naked Abe* admist active volcanos, mad robots, and last-minute retakes. After that, *Spaced* will go onto the shelf for a bit, while creator Tom Stazer works on his new *Lionheart* continuity for *Critters*.

—JC—

THE SPECTRE

Written by DOUG MOENCH, illustrated by GRAY MORROW; edited by BOB GREENBERGER, then ANDREW HELFER

32 four-color pages, $1.25; monthly from DC COMICS INC.

Issues #12-15 continue the "Major Arcana" series. Three talismans have been stolen from Madame Xanadu's parlor, and we follow each of them as they effect the lives of three civilians. They are a pickpocket, a high school nerd, and a blind woman. All of whom receive magical powers from the Talismans. Needless to say, the Spectre must retrieve the Talismans. This all builds to a chilling climax as Corrigan must enter the body of the Spectre, as Spectre inhabits Madame Xanadu's tarot deck to confont those responsible for the whole mystic mess. Issue #16 is a sort of "catch your breath" issue for the readers, and we just don't know about #'s 17 and 18, as editor Greenberger leaves the title due to an all-too-heavy workload.

Also, look for *Spectre Annual #1*, by Moench and Jim Baikie, with a back up by Moench and Gordon Purcell. It's 48 pages with no ads. The lead story features Deadman, and introduces a new villain for the *Spectre*. It's a Demon-like creature who is rather like an evil counterpart to the Chosen, from *Millennium*. The annual also sports a nifty cover by Art Adams.

Fans of the classic Fleisher/Aparo *Spectre* stories, done 12 years and one lawsuit ago, are invited to check out the *Wrath of the Spectre* entry.

—JW—

SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN

Written by GERRY CONWAY, illustrated by SAL BUSCEMA; edited by JIM SALICRUP

32 four-color pages; $1.00; newsstand distribution; monthly from MARVEL COMICS GROUP

You may not realize this, but this

Tarantula's back—well, actually it's a new one

represents the return of the *original creative team of more than 10 years ago* to this particular title: Gerry Conway and Sal Buscema.

The new Tarantula travels to the U.S., seeking political refugees and illegal aliens who have fled his South American nation. Spidey defeats him with ease, but not before Tarantula tricks the new Captain America into attacking Spider-Man!

Daily Bugle editor-in-chief Robbie Robertson meets the Kingpin's newest hitman, Tombstone. Their encounter leaves Robbie with a broken back and brings Tombstone to the attention of a *very* angry web-slinger.

Toward summer, Peter Parker embarks on a book tour for his newly-published collection of Spider-Man photos [*see Amazing Spider-Man entry*]

SPEED RACER

Written by LAMAR WALDRON, pencilled by JILL THOMPSON; inked by BRIAN THOMAS; edited by TONY CAPUTO

24 four-color pages, $1.75; monthly from NOW COMICS

"***Speed Racer*** really is an American tradition," says series editor Tony Caputo, referring to the popular Japanese animated series upon which the NOW Comics book is based. "After 20 years of syndication, there's a high recognition factor," he says.

NOW Comics will continue to present new stories based on the familiar *Speed Racer* characters, although the comic book will emphasize making those characters more realistic. While each issue will present a complete story, several issues will also be tied together with some continuity.

Issue #7 (December, 1987) finds 17-year-old ace racetrack driver Greg "Speed" Racer journeying from L.A. to San Francisco, where he encounters a "Nautilus" like submarine and its mad genius captain.

GRX—the world's fastest car with a haunted engine—makes a comeback in issue #8 and 9. In a flashback sequence, it is revealed how the old GRX car was totalled, and how the haunted engine was salvaged to be put into this new, improved version.

Speed Racer goes travelling to faraway places in the next series of issues. He faces a ninja threat (and a new penciller, Tom Morgan) while racing in Japan, in issues #10 and 11. He then visits China where he must race atop the Great Wall of China, in issue #12. England is next, in issue #13, where Speed takes part in the English Grand Prix... and encounters the infamous Alpha Team. Issue #14 finds him in Africa, racing in the Trans-Africa Road Rally. In Egypt, Trixie is assumed to be the reincarnation of a long-dead princess, a case of mistaken identity occurring in issue #15.

His adventures are many and his racecar's gadgets are wild and unique, but Greg faces it all head-on. "Speed Racer is a special kind of teenager," says editor Tony Caputo. "He's a star—The Lancelot of the Speedway'—but he must face the adult world of greed every time he races."

—JH—

Some pieces from George Booker's sketchbook—the artist on ***Speed Racer*** *#8 and 9*

Cover by Kim DeMulder

SPELLBINDERS

Written by PAT MILLS, illustrated by BRYAN TALBOT; edited by BOB KEENAN

32 full-color pages, $1.25; monthly from QUALITY COMICS

In this, the final issue of the series (#12), we learn the fate of Torquemada, the ABC Warriors, and Nemesis the Warlock. But what about Nemesis's son Thoth and his pet dinosaur Satanus, and what are they doing in the Time Wastes? And just when you thought it was safe to go back into the water, there's the threat of "The Sea Beast." This issue boasts a cover by Kim DeMulder that would make Stan Drake proud.

—MSM—

SPIDER-MAN COMICS MAGAZINE

Written by STAN LEE, pencilled by JOHN BUSCEMA and JOHN ROMITA, Jr.; inked by JIM MOONEY and MICKEY DEMEO; edited by JIM SALICRUP and GLENN HERDLING

64 four-color pages; digest size; $1.50; newsstand distribution; bi-monthly from MARVEL COMICS GROUP

This digest title continues the chronological reprinting of *Amazing Spider-Man* tales at the rate of three stories per issue.

Spider-Man Comics Magazine #9, on sale in January, re-presents the following stories: "In the Blaze of Battle!" from *Amazing Spider-Man #77*, where the Human Torch teams up with the Wall Crawler to tackle the Lizard; "The Night of the Prowler!" from issue *#78*, where Spidey battles a dangerous new villain whose secret identity may shock readers; and *#79*'s "To Prowl No More!", the sequel to the previous adventure.

The tenth edition of the digest reprints "On the Trail of . . . The Chameleon!" from *Amazing Spider-Man #80*, including a battle between Spidey and Peter Parker (you read that right!). *#81*'s "The Coming of the Kangaroo!," introducing a villain that may appeal to fans of "Crocodile" Dundee; and issue *#82*'s "And Then Came Electro!," where Spider-Man not only gets a charge from one of his enemies but also guest stars on a television talk show. *Spider-Man Comics Magazine #10* goes on sale in March.

May's 11th issue of the digest opens with "The Coming of the Schemer!" from *Amazing Spider-Man #83*, which also begins a multi-part Kingpin epic. Following that story are *#84*'s "The Kingpin Strikes Back!" and *#85*'s "The Secret of the Schemer!" Readers of the Kingpin's sinister exploits in the pages of *Daredevil* may want to read these reprints, as they provide a great deal of information into the background of Marvel's popular crimelord. —ME—

The flesh is willing, but The Spirit is weak.

THE SPIRAL ZONE

Written by MICHAEL FLEISHER; layouts by CARMINE INFANTINO; pencilled by DON HECK; inked by DICK GIORDANO; edited by JOEY CAVALIERI

4-issue limited series; 32 four-color pages; 75 cents; newsstand distribution; monthly from DC COMICS INC.

The fourth and final issue of the mini-series, on sale in January, features a shootout at Overlord's Chrysler Building headquarters. Ominously, it's titled "The Triumph of Overlord."

THE SPIRIT

Written and illustrated by WILL EISNER; edited by DAVE SCHREINER

32 black-and-white pages; $2.00; monthly from KITCHEN SINK PRESS

Kitchen Sink's most regular title ("It's never missed a deadline yet," says publisher Denis Kitchen) will continue chronological reprinting of Will Eisner's classic *Spirit* stories. Eisner will continue to draw new covers for the book and editor Dave Schreiner will continue to write his popular column about the reprinted stories, complete with Eisner's insightful comments.

For the next six months or so, the book will be reprinting stories from late 1948 and 1949, considered to be the peak years of the series. Highlighting the next few issues are "The Amulet of Osiris," one of Eisner's jewel stories and another of his experiments in storytelling (*#38*, December), a series of stories in which the Spirit becomes more involved with Ellen Dolan and even proposes marriage (*#39*, January), and "Agent Cosmic," one of Eisner's fabled outer space stories (*#40*, February).

Due for Christmas is *The Spirit Picture Disk*, a record album featuring art by Eisner and five newly-recorded versions of "Ev'ry Little Bug," the song Eisner wrote in 1946 and featured in many *Spirit* stories. A friend of Eisner's wrote music for the song and, although it was published in sheet music form in 1947, the song was never recorded. Also on the disc will be excerpts from the obscure 1948 *Spirit* television show and several new instrumentals named after some of the strip's characters. The disc's illustrations are the cover for the original sheet music on one side and an all-new piece of Eisner art featuring characters from the 1946-47 era on the other side. Price is $12.98. —BE—

ST. GEORGE

Written by DANIEL CHICHESTER and MARGARET CLARK; illustrated by KLAUS JANSON; edited by STEVE BUCELLATO

32 four-color pages; $1.25; bi-monthly from MARVEL/EPIC COMICS

Unlike the other two series in Epic's interrelated Shadow Line Saga, the central character in *St. George* is not a member of the hidden superior Shadow race. *[See the previews for Doctor Zero and Power Line for more information]*.

Michael Devlin is human, a Roman Catholic priest who served as a missionary in Nicaragua and, frustrated at not being able to do anything for the poor through normal channels, became involved in the political and military struggle. During his service there, he was captured by government troops, fought his way out of prison and generally was involved in violence that a normal priest never experiences.

Called back to the United States to serve in a poor parish in Brooklyn. There, he sees many injustices similar to what he saw in Central America. Just at the point where he is feeling trapped in the situation of "Can I really do anything for these people?", Devlin is approached by a Father Barnabas of the Order of St. George, an incient order considered similar to the Knights of Malta.

Actually, the Order of St. George is a Shadow dweller monastery. Over the centuries, the order has always recruited a human to serve as its Knight of St. George. Devlin is offered the position and the powers that go with it. The Knight receives a streamlined armor, refined over the centuries, that enhances human abilities to Shadow levels.

Partly as a result of the debut of Doctor Zero, Devlin accepts the offer, in the hopes that he will be able to do something about the problems he sees. His actions will focus on the one-on-one level, according to co-writer Margaret Clark, "helping one person at a time. He's not Doctor Zero, he can't save everything in the world. He can help one person and make a difference."

In the first issue of *St. George*, which ships in April, Devlin travels to Greece to the monastery and is presented with the armor. Then, in issue *#2*, he rescues a kid from the local Brooklyn Catholic Youth Organization who was kidnapped overseas by terrorists with drug connections. In the third issue, Devlin returns to his old stomping grounds in Central America, following the trail of the terrorists' drug connections. —BE—

32 four-color pages; $1.25; bi-monthly from Marvel Comics

When he inadvertently destroys Pittsburgh and creates *The Pitt*, Ken Connell is blown apart by the force of the explosion. Only his force of will allows him to re-integrate himself, with near-total success.

Connell takes the Star Brand and, unknown to her, gives it to his girl friend, Maddie Felix, the woman who is carrying his child.

When the child is born, he has all the power and knowledge endowed by the Star Brand, and is completely sentient. Maddie is nearly killed by the birth, and the child heals her instantly. Despite his intelligence, he will age normally, a process made even more interesting by the fact that the New Universe adheres more strictly to normal time.

The child will embark on a quest for his father, and in doing so may well become the savior of mankind.

Current plans call for *The Star Brand* to become monthly at the earliest possible opportunity.

Character sketch by Klaus Janson.

STAR COMICS MAGAZINE

Written and illustrated by VARIOUS; edited by SID JACOBSON

64 four-color pages; digest size; $1.50; newsstand distribution; bi-monthly from MARVEL COMICS GROUP

This digest continues to reprint various of Marvel's children's comics line, including material from *Heathcliff, Meatballs, Muppet Babies, Elektra: Assassin*, and the like.

Ah-ah! Just wanted to see if you were paying attention!

STAR RANGERS

Written by MARK ELLIS; illustrated by JIM MOONEY; covers by DAVE DORMAN

32 black-and-white pages; $1.95; monthly from ADVENTURE PUBLICATIONS

The year is 2487. Mankind has reached the stars, capitalism is god, and corporations hold all the power. From a token central government, the Sol Commonwealth, come the Star Rangers, an interstellar fleet who must struggle to maintain outside sovereign corporate territory.

Star Rangers follows the crew of the star ship *Sabre* as they become involved in escalating corporate hostilities: Jonathon Blake, the rugged and resourceful commander; Maya Lucas, a former assassin and weapons specialist; Aristo, a reptilian empath from the Saideem planet; Ahrikeem, a deadly warrior from a savage world, and Radac, an artificial man created and conditioned by the Biotech Corporation.

"*Star Rangers* is a realistic and gritty interpretation of the future," said an Adventure spokesman. "Unlike most science fiction titles, *Star Rangers* will not be set against an alien invasion. In this series ruthless corporations like 'TBM' and 'Nippon' compete against each other for the control of planets and alien labor."

According to writer Mark Ellis, "We have seen the enemy and it is us."

In issue *#2* the Rangers seize a vessel of illegal weapons and are lured to the stange planet of Amicus, a world independent of the Commonwealth. It is on Amicus that the Rangers discover a black market for illegal weapons and drugs. In issue *#3*, the Rangers covertly return to Amicus to free Radac and to gather proof of the illegal activities. Issue *#4* will be the last part of the four-part storyline involving Amicus and the illegal weapons. Ellis promises "a surprise ending!"

Issue *#5* begins a 12-part storyline that will forever alter the course of the galaxy. Ellis said that this upcoming storyline will find the Rangers taking initiative rather than simply reacting. According to Ellis, "There will be a lot more characterization, and the story will be much more Watchmen-esque in plot and theme."

Also beginning in *Star Rangers #2* is a six page *Death Hawk* story by Adam Hughes. The story introduces Death Hawk, and the feature will continue in issue *#3* and *#4*.

STAR TREK

Written by PETER DAVID; pencilled by TOM SUTTON; inked by RICARDO VILLAGRAN; edited by BOB GREENBERGER

32 four-color pages; $1.00; newsstand distribution; monthly from DC COMICS INC.

In his first work for DC Comics, neo-*Star Trek* scripter Peter David plans to boldly carry readers where no fans have gone before.

Issues *#48-50* form a trilogy involving a band of marauders who seize a starship and wreak havoc among the federation-Klingon border, igniting the threat of intergalactic war. Those issues explore the uneasy relationship between the two parties.

The sub-plot revolving around the romance of Nancy Rice and the Klingon named Konom intensifies towards *#50*, as they question their marriage plans after seeing the severely-handicapped offspring of a Klingon-human mating. Editor Bob Greenberger won't reveal whether or not they'll be tying the knot, but jokes "our recommendation for issue *#50* is . . . bring rice just in case!"

Star Trek #50 also boasts a painted cover by Mitch O'Connell. Dave Cockrum, who drew some of the Marvel *Star Trek* comics, returns to the Enterprise as the guest penciller of issues *#51* and *#52*. Those issues reveal the story of a crew member whose telepathic abilities go haywire, causing the rest of the people on board the ship to believe that the Enterprise has been transformed into a

THE STAR BRAND

Written and pencilled by JOHN BYRNE; finished art by TOM PALMER; edited by HOWARD MACKIE

Dante's *Inferno*-like hell. I'll bet *he* never gets invited to any parties!

The current *Star Trek* creative team will continue to delve into the personalities of Enterprise crew members for future sub-plots. After issue #52, Greenberger announces that there will be another lengthy Star Trek serial, the first major one since the popular "Mirror Universe" saga a while back.

Scheduled for a May release is *Star Trek Annual #3*, including a 38 page tale pencilled by veteran Superman artist Curt Swan. The annual reveals the details of what the editor refers to as "Scotty's Greatest Romance." The story unfolds in an unusual manner: it's told *backwards*! Page one starts with the *end* of that relationship, and the beginning of the love affair is chronicled on page 38.

Greenberger also mentioned that DC is still awaiting word from Paramount Pictures as to the contents of the *Star Trek V* screenplay. The film was recently bumped from its Christmas 1988 release date and is now slated as a Summer 1989 theatrical debut. Star William Shatner is pegged to direct. Why do I feel like I'm writing for *Variety* all of a sudden?

—ME—

STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION

Written by MIKE CARLIN; pencilled by PABLO MARCOS; inked by CHARLES GARZON and AIRNE STARK; edited by BOB GREENBERGER

6-issue mini-series; 32 four-color pages; $1.00; newsstand distribution; monthly from DC COMICS INC.

Starfleet captain Jean-Luc Picard, security chief Tasha Yar, navigator Geordi LaForge, and other cast members from television's new *Star Trek: The Next Generation* series will continue original stories based on concepts from the TV show.

Editor Bob Greenberger and writer Mike Carlin agree that this title is focusing on a theme that has made the new TV program—and its 1960s predecessor—so popular: human emotions. Paramount Pictures, owner of the Star Trek properties, has granted DC the creative freedom to explore the personalities and backgrounds of the series' characters, something that the TV show rarely does. "There are civilians, married couples, and families on board the *Enterprise* that will provide us with plenty of material for sub-plots and character bits," says Greenberger. Witness the recent Christmas story in issue #2 as an example of this.

A figure first seen in the television program's two-hour pilot will resurface in *Star Trek: The Next Generation #3-5*, causing Captain Picard and the *Enterprise* crew a tremendous amount of grief. Those issues will also show the reactions of the civilians on board the starship to a crisis as the *Enterprise* is invaded by a hostile element.

Another subplot to be explored in the mini-series is the background of *Enterprise* security ace Tasha Yar. She hails from a decadent planet known as "Ghetto World," where she had to learn the ways of survival at a very early age.

Greenberger is definitely ecstatic over the visuals for the mini-series. "A lot of people don't think of Pablo Marcos as a penciller, but he's bringing a dynamic story-telling style to *Star Trek: The Next Generation*."

When queried about the ratings of the television series which inspired this comic, Greenberger was pleased to announce that "the ratings on the early episodes are phenomenal! In some markets where it's aired in prime time, it's beating out network shows and making it to that time period's top three. (*Star Trek: The Next Generation* is a syndicated program).

"If all goes well, my personal goal is to bring the comic back next year as either another mini-series or as an ongoing monthly book, concurrent with the TV show's second season opener."—ME—

STAR WARS 3-D

Written by LEN WEIN; pencilled by GLEN JOHNSON; edited by JOHN STEPHENSEN

32 3-D pages; $2.50; quarterly from BLACKTHORNE COMICS

It's Havoc on Hoth, the ice planet from *The Empire Strikes Back*. After the destruction of the Death Star, the rebels have landed and established a base. So, what kind of havoc is being wreaked? You'll have to read this one to find out.

If you're thinking, "Boy, I wish I could see this in 3-D," you're in for a massive treat.

You'll also visit the spice mines of Kessel, the large gaseous planet that was mentioned in the story. May the force be with you . . .

—MSM—

STARLIGHT

Written by C.J. HENDERSON; illustrated by URIEL ANTONIO and SCOTT HANNA

32 black-and-white pages; $1.95; from ETERNITY COMICS

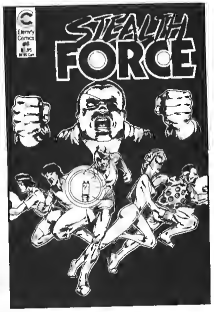
"The Outer Space Babes are five of the sexiest, smartest, and toughest women you'll ever want to meet," said creator C.J. Henderson. Capt. Audrey Thrust,

Tough sexy women in outer space.

Lt. Ursulla Snyder, Sgt. Sybil Callahan, Sgt. Nadine Sympson, and Dr. Jade Li Wong are brought together to solve the riddle of Quadrant 2, a section of space where only men are dying mysteriously. It's all part of a fiendish plot by Dr. Kevin McDavid to meet the kidnap Audrey Thrust, whom he has had a crush on since she was 12 years-old.

"Once the menace is ended and McDavid is turned to ashes and bones," Henderson said, "the government refuses to let the Babes take credit. In response, they commandeer their ship and head for deep space." But they may have made a mistake. "They have no idea where they are going, no food to speak of (meat-flavored tube paste—*bleeaaach!*), no clothes except skimpy slave outfits left by their would-be captors, and no proof that there is anyone in space aside from themselves." The thought of spending the rest of their lives searching an empty galaxy for a department store with their sizes has the girls climbing the walls—until the space pirates attack!

"This is a very personal project for me," Henderson said. "I love the Babes, and I love the way Uriel brings them to life on the page." Henderson is also the writer behind Eternity's *Ninja*. Artist Uriel is the new artist on *Ex-Mutants* beginning with V.2 #1 in March.



A new inker for Stealth Force.

STEALTH FORCE

Written by MIKE VALERIO; pencilled by PATRICK OLLIFFE; inked by MICHAEL LAING

32 black-and-white pages; $1.95; monthly from ETERNITY COMICS

Big changes are in store for the Force. Beginning with issue #5, Michael Laing takes over as the regular inker, bringing a whole new look to the title. And in issue #7, The Secretary is fired from The Board and joins Stealth Force as they plot their revenge.

"If you've been awaiting for Hannah and the boys to get off the dime and kick The Board's collective butt," said writer Mike Valerio, "the wait is over."

Issue #8, "The Island" sends the team down to the Bahamas to destroy or disarm six Minuteman missiles under The Board's control.

STEEL PULSE, PRO WRESTLING ADVENTURES

Written by T. MOTLEY; pencilled by T. MOTLEY; inked by T. MOTLEY; edited by T. MOTLEY

32 black-and-white pages; $2.00; semi-annually from FANDOM HOUSE

Steel Pulse #4, coming out some time in the summer of 1988, will tie up all loose ends, plug all plot holes, resolve all dilemmas, and leave readers with a "satisfaction akin to consuming a sumptuous meal that someone you dislike is paying for," according to publisher Dennis Pimple. Pimple claims to have seen the elusive T. Motley, creator of the comic, at last night's Thinking Plague concert, but one wonders.

"With a Championship match in issue #1, a tag-team match in #2, and the introduction of yet another masked wrestler in #3, one might wonder what Mot could do to top it off," said Pimple. "Two words are sufficient: 'Battle Royale'."

As he has with the other issues, Pimple will write the back-up story for the comic, to be illustrated by Bob Conway, a contributor to *Critters*. "You guessed it: rasslin' funny animals," Pimple concluded.

STEPHEN DARKLORD

Written by BOB KRAUS and WAYNE LOSEY; illustrated by WAYNE LOSEY

32 black-and-white pages; $1.75; quarterly from R.A.K. GRAPHICS

Penciller Wayne Losey takes over co-scripting on this post-holocaust vampire tale.

STEVE CANYON MAGAZINE

Written and illustrated by MILTON CANIFF; edited by PETER POPLASKI

72 black-and-white pages; $5.95; quarterly from KITCHEN SINK PRESS

The 40th anniversary of the *Steve Canyon* strip will be celebrated in issue #19 of *Steve Canyon Magazine*, due in December. The 144-page double-sized issue will include a full year's worth of the strip (three complete adventures from 1953-54), a large feature, with lots of illustrations, showcasing the promotional art, much of it very obscure, for the strip's introduction in 1946, and a long piece by Caniff about the creation of strip.

The covers for the book are a special treat for Caniff fans. In 1946, when he announced *Steve Canyon*, *Time* magazine did a cover story on him and had him do a self-portrait for the cover. For some unexplained reason, his art was never used; instead, another artist did the cover, basing his work on Caniff's unused piece. Caniff's original will see publication for the first time as the front cover of the special issue, while the back cover will reproduce the *Time* cover.

In softcover, #19 will retail at $7.95. A signed hardcover edition, of which only 900 will be available, will sell for $39.95. This will be the first time Caniff has ever done any kind of signed edition.

Future issues of the magazine will concentrate more on reprinting the *Steve Canyon* strip and less on associated features. Reprints of *Scorchy Smith* by Noel Sickles will continue to appear occasionally.

In keeping with the change in editorial direction, issue #20 will feature two complete stories spanning the period May-Nov. 1954, for a total of 72 pages of artwork. Readers interesting in current *Steve Canyon* work should check out *Comics Revue*.

—BK—

The new Doctor Strange, as rendered by Rich Cese end Randy Emberlin, from ***Strange Teles #15.***

STORMWATCHER

Written by ALAN COWSILL and IAN ABINNETI
Illustrated by ANDREW CURRIE, edited by MARTIN LOCK

24 black-and-white pages, $1.95 bi-monthly from HARRIER COMICS

Atck Stormwatcher is a dwarf who once led a roguish life with a band of friends. In their day they were invincible in a pub brawl, but he's now married, henpecked and miserable. His solution is to contact his former friends and renew the easy life. Unfortunately for him, they've all changed considerably since the old days.

Set on the same world as ***Barbarienne*** and ***Cuirass***, ***Stormwatcher*** will also be a fantasy series and will debut as an eight-page bonus strip in ***#4*** or ***#5*** of ***Cuirass***. —FPI—

STRANGE TALES

'Dr Strange' written by PETER GILLIS pencilled by RICHARD CASE, inked by RANDY EMBERLIN 'Cloak and Dagger' written by TERRY AUSTIN, pencilled by DAN LAWLIS, inked by BOB WIACEK, edited by CARL POTTS

32 four-color pages, 75 cents, newstand distribution, monthly from MARVEL COMICS GROUP

Lots of wild goings on in both of these features, so let's get down to it. In ***#14***, we witness the destruction of Shumu Gorath, as Dr. Strange assimilates his vast power, and kills himself! ***#15*** involves Kalua, as Strange becomes one with the godhead. The big K must convince Strange to return from egolessness and back to our realm. No easy task, as you might imagine. In ***#16***, Gillis shows us much of Dr. Strange's heretofore unknown early history, his parents, childhood days, etc. By ***#17*** it's back to the mansion (or should I say "Sanctum Sanctorum"?) and full power for the good ol' doc, and it's a good thing, 'cos ***#18*** and ***#19*** herald the return of (guess who?).

As if that weren't enough, you get Cloak and Dagger at no extra cost! Issue ***#14*** features the Kingpin, the Punisher, *and* Power Pack! It seems that 'pin has sent the Punisher to rub out C&D, and poor little Power Pack get caught in the middle. The issue also sports some nifty pencils by the lovely and talented June Brigman, as well as a birthday party for a hamster. Issue ***#15*** is basically a Dagger solo story with a Cloak vignette. Dagger has a rather eventful walk through the streets of New York with her stepdad, who is rather insistent about "taking care of his little girl." The Cloak vignette involves Mayhem, about whom writer Terry Austin has some major sub-plot goings on. Issues ***#16-19*** are a multi-part story featuring the return of an Austin-created baddie, the specifics of which are far too complicated to describe in this preview, and would only spoil the suspence, y'know! By the way, doesn't Austin cram in a ton of plot for an 11-page story? And you thought of him just as an inker! —JW—

STRIKE!

Written by CHUCK DIXON pencilled and co-plotted by TOM LYLE; inked by ROMEO TANGHAL, edited by FRED BURKE

32 four-color pages, $1.75 monthly from ECLIPSE COMICS

Strike! ***#5*** will be the first issue of 1988 to hit the stands, and in it Dennis Forman, the new Strike, will make his first appearance as a super-hero, and fails miserably. "He is pretty much held up to ridicule," says writer Chuck Dixon. He finds out that the powers and the costume don't automatically gain him respect, and he has to deal with that. He also discovers that his power harness has a connection with an alien race on the other side of the universe, and he comes to grips with that as well.

This leads in the *Sgt. Strike Meets Strike Special*, which is a one-shot which chronicles the first meeting between Sgt. Strike and Dennis. The story will go a long way to clearing up a lot of unanswered questions.

Further along, Sgt. Strike and Strike get involved with the Iran/Iraq conflict which Dixon describes as an all-out action story. Also, Skywolf will be stepping out of the pages of ***Airboy*** to join our two Strikes for an adventure. Sgt. Strike returns the favor by appearing in the Skywolf back-up in ***Airboy*** ***#34-35***, and they meet as well in the ***Airfighters Meet Sgt. Strike Special*** this Spring.

Also, the original Sgt. Strike "reprint" stories from ***All-Thrill*** will be discontinued as of ***#7***, and full-length Strike series will be the norm. —ES—

A pencilled Cloek and Degger splesh, from ***Strange Telee #17, by new artist Den Lewlis.***

STRIKEFORCE: MORITURI

Written by PETER GILLIS and JAMES B. HUDNALL; pencilled by BRENT ANDERSON and HUW THOMAS inked by SCOTT WILLIAMS and VAL MAYERIK, edited by CARL POTTS

32 four-color pages, $1.00 monthly from MARVEL COMICS GROUP

In ***#17***, which is guest-pencilled by Scott Williams, we learn of some of the more unpleasant aspects of the Morituri process: the one-year-lifespan being the least unpleasant of these. The issue will focus on the dark side of the Paledin.

Issue ***#18*** centers around Will, the telepath, while ***#19-20*** will focus on Alina's pregnancy. The war will not end, but many of the aspects of it will change, as all of the first generation Morituri, and one of the second generation will be dead by the end of ***#20***. It will also mark the end of Gillis and Anderson's tenure on the book.

The second generation of Morituri may be dead (as of issue ***#21***), but the threat of the Horde lives on, and continues to assault the Earth. The alien force is growing stronger each passing day, and more violent. A new generation of Morituri is needed.

Many members of Strikeforce: Morituri are outcasts, such as Edwards, the former Paledian soldier who was a Horde slave, and Baker, who lost everyone he loved to the invasion, and sees the Morituri process as his way to revenge. They all share a hatred from the Horde, and the knowledge that whatever their powers and motivations, they will die within a year, due to the *Morituri* process. —JW—

What we want to see is a cross-over between ***Strikeforce Morituri*** *end* ***Suicide Squad***

STRIP AIDS USA

Written and illustrated by VARIOUS, edited by TRINA ROBBINS, BILL SIENKIEWICZ and ROBERT TRIPTOW

price and format to be determined: one-shot from LAST GASP

As "We Are the World" followed in the footsteps of "Band-Aid" so ***Strip Aids USA*** follows its British inspiration ***Strip Aids***, as an all-star comics anthology to benefit AIDS research.

Co-editors Trina Robbins and Bill Sienkiewicz came up with the same idea independently of one another, but are joining forces, together with ***Gay Comics*** editor Robert Triptow, to get the finest writers and artists in the U.S. to contribute to the book, which will be published by Last Gasp and released next summer. The book is tentatively planned as a trade paperback. "It will be a true blockbuster," says Robbins, who is handling West Coast editing duties, while Sienkiewicz covers the East. Sienkiewicz will also be doing the cover.

"Everyone I've spoken to has been so excited and enthusiastic about this," says Robbins. "We all just really want to do something, and here's our chance." —HMacD—

SUBURBAN HIGH LIFE

Written and illustrated by VARIOUS, edited by FRANK CIROCCO

32 black-and-white pages, $1.75, bi-monthly from SLAVE LABOR GRAPHICS

The comic that makes strong men weak and young girls blush will continue to feature a unique blend of comedy and, uh, more comedy.

What kind of comedy?

"Wacky, mainly," reveals editor Frank Cirocco, "although we'll occasionally be

zany and might also be madcap, but only if we are really desperate."

And what can we look forward to in future issues?

"Lots of printed pages and color covers," Cirocco said confidently. Associate editor Scott Saavedra shed further light on the matter. "Some of those pages will have Norman Dog, Rick Geary, Mark Martin, Jim Hummel and Basilio Amaro on them."

"Or at least their artwork," added Cirocco.

SUE & SALLY SMITH FLYING NURSES

Written by UNDETERMINED, from original stories by JOE GILL, illustrated by DICK GIORDANO, REESE WHITMAN, DICK CLEMMONS, CHARLIE NICHOLS, RED ANWAY and others; cover by PAUL GULACY, edited by STEVE MATTSSON

24 black-and-white pages, $1.50, eight-issue limited series, monthly from NICCITAT COMICS

This strange Charlton Comics romance/adventure series from 1963 will get even stranger this Spring courtesy of writer-to-be-named and the new publishers of ***Boris the Bear***.

"It's way funny," says Nicotat editor, Steve Mattsson, "them Flying Nurses be an odd pair all by their lonesome, but as written by writer-to-be-named... oh, boy!"

Even if you just like to look at the pictures, this is a comic for you. It features some of Dick "***Hot Wheels***" Giordano's early work along with some ultra-clean art by a buncha guys you've never heard of. The covers will be drawn by Paul "Goodtime" Gulacy and will feature lots o' streamlined women and sexy airplanes.

SUICIDE SQUAD

Written by JOHN OSTRANDER, pencilled by LUKE McDONNELL, inked by BOB LEWIS, edited by BOB GREENBERGER

32 four-color pages, 75 cents, newsstand distribution; monthly from DC COMICS, INC.

Well, we regret our oversight of ***Suicide Squad*** last time around, but rather than make it up to you by previewing all the months we missed, we'll preview the upcoming months. Hey! Such a deal! And you thought we weren't nice guys.

Suicide Squad #12 is the second part of a two-part story involving drug-running in Colombia. The Squad teams up with Speedy (of ***Teen Titans*** fame), and gains a new member: Vixen. "We want to maintain a good male/female ratio, as well as a hero/villain ratio," says editor Bob Greenberger. "We've also wanted to add Vixen since the very beginning, but this is out first chance to do so." A chaplain for the group will show up, in response to a question posed in ***The Question***, as to why there aren't any nice Christian men-of-the-cloth presented in comics. "Father Craemer is the chaplain," says writer John Ostrander, "and he's a really nice guy. I know many good people who are religious, so this was not a stretch for me." The team is led by Nightshade in ***#12***, and consists of: Nightshade, Captain Boomerang, Vixen, Black Orchid, and Speedy.

Issue ***#13*** is another second-parter. Wait a second. Where was the first part? In ***Justice League International #13***, that's there. That's right, the JLI and the SS meet, when the Suicide Squad goes back to Russia to free Nemesis who's been wasting away in a prison camp there since issue ***#7***. "We get a lot of interesting pair-offs once the two teams reconcile their differences," says Greenberger, "such as the Martian Manhunter and Vixen, and Captain Atom and Nightshade. That last one will set up some major happenings in the ***Captain Atom*** book. Read your ***Captain Atom*** preview, boys and girls. Flag and Batman really get into a knock-down-drag-out fight, with both of them getting really trashed." The team of this story will contain Flag, Javelin, the Duchess (a new character), Bronze Tiger, Nightshade, Captain Boomerang, and Nemesis.

A three-parter begins in issue ***#14*** leading (naturally) into ***#15*** and ***16***. The Squad heads into the Nightshade dimension to rescue Nightshade's brother, Larry, as promised to her when she joined the team. Check out ***Secret Origins #28*** between issues ***#14*** and ***15***, for the full secret origin of Nightshade. The Squad must fight against the Incubus, and an enraged Enchantress who discovers herself freed from magical restraints once she enters the Nightshade dimension! "Enchantress goes absolutely nuts," says Ostrander. "They're in a magical dimension, so she's incredibly strong. Here's her chance to get revenge on all the others... and then some."

On their way out of the Nightshade dimension ***#16***, the Squad accidentally ends up in Shade's dimension, from the '70s Ditko series of the same name. It's Meta Zone time, when both Shade and the Squad help each other get out of the dimension. Meanwhile back on Earth, Congress has found out the Suicide Squad's connection to Task Force X, and are beginning judiciary committee hearings on the subject. Unfortunately, the man who heads the Senate Judiciary Committee is Senator Wayne Eden, Nightshade's father!

When the Squad arrives back on Earth in issue ***#17***, more or less in one piece, they discover that the Jihad is back, and they're out for blood. But who'll get the Squad first: the government or the Jihad? And when Punch and Jewelee join the team, things get even more interesting for their old sparring partner Nightshade. What about their other new member, Shade?

An upcoming story will find Captain Boomerang captured while wearing the Mirror Master garb which he's been using lately for a crime spree. He is assigned a mission as Mirror Master, but he's supposed to be on a mission as Captain Boomerang too! Holy double identity trouble! "Two of the most popular characters in the book," says Ostrander, "are Boomerang and Deadshot. I like writing those characters, but I wonder why Boomerang is so popular. He's an absolute sleazebell! I see no signs of him changing. If anything, he's going to get sleazier."

Happy now? That's us, the happy crew at ***Amazing Heroes***, getting more perfect day by day. —AM—

SUPERMAN

Written and pencilled by JOHN BYRNE; inked by KARL KESEL and JOHN BEATTY; edited by MIKE CARLIN

32 four-color pages, 75 cents, newsstand distribution; monthly; then twice a month from DC COMICS, INC.

As mentioned in the preview entry for ***Adventures of Superman***, editor Mike Carlin and author/artist John Byrne are initiating a stricter flow of continuity between the Superman titles in 1988.

Superman #17 features the return of the Silver Banshee, a deadly villainess seen recently in ***Action #595***. That story will reveal some of her dark secrets. Also in ***#17*** is a continuation of the Superman/Wonder Woman romantic angle which started in ***Wonder Woman #16***. From ***Superman #17*** the love story segues into ***Adventures of Superman #440***, then finally climaxes in the anniversary blockbuster ***Action Comics #600***.

Mike Mignola guest pencils "The Return to Krypton" in ***Superman #18***, written by John Byrne and inked by Karl Kesel. This story, which started in the back of ***Action #600***, features Superman's deterioration from the crippling effects of Kryptonite radiation poisoning [*see the Action Comics preview entry for more details*]. Editor Carlin adds that Superman will come to a better understanding of his alien heritage upon the completion of his storyline.

John Byrne returns as the strip's penciller with ***Superman #19***, as Dreadnought and Psi-phon, introduced in ***Adventures of Superman #441***, reappear to make life difficult for the Action Ace.

Another sub-plot being introduced into the Superman titles is an identity crisis for the World's Greatest Super-hero. Who is more important, Superman or Clark Kent? Could—or *should*—one exist without the other? Or should the Man of Steel start his life anew with a third persona? And what about the hero's new comprehension of his Kryptonian heritage? This psychological dilemma will definitely affect Superman's performance as a crime fighter, and will continue in the series for the immediate future.

Superman #20 will be released one week after ***Adventures of Superman #442***. But wait a minute? Didn't ***Superman #19*** go on sale only two weeks

DAILY PLANET

ACTION GOES WEEKLY!

DC Comics launches landmark publishing project in 1988!

by Lois Lane

Nineteen eighty-eight will be a landmark year for comics publishing. The oldest comic publisher still in existence, DC Comics will reflect on past accomplishments by celebrating the 50th birthday of the publication of ACTION COMICS #1. That landmark title launched SUPERMAN, a then unknown hero, a character now recognized and admired throughout the world. More importantly, DC Comics will be looking forward by re-launching ACTION COMICS on an innovative publishing schedule. Just as SUPERMAN paved the road for the comics industry during the late thirties, so he begins his fifty-first year of publication in a ground-breaking book: ACTION COMICS WEEKLY will debut as an ongoing weekly comic.

"...We've proved that the time is right for a weekly comic" notes Jenette Kahn, President and Publisher of DC Comics. "We're not alone in our interest in capitalizing on that innovation. We fully expect that ACTION COMICS WEEKLY will change comics publishing history just as ACTION COMICS #1 did 50 years ago."

Every week, ACTION COMICS WEEKLY will include six features focusing on DC Comics characters. These features will go on a brief hiatus at the conclusion of each story line, with one exception: SUPERMAN will appear in every issue in a two-page center spread continued story. The first features in rotation will be:

GREEN LANTERN,
BLACKHAWK, DEADMAN,*
SECRET SIX and WILD DOG.*

Among the creative talent signed to work on ACTION COMICS WEEKLY are: Mike Grell, Mike Baron, Peter David, Roger Stern, Curt Swan, Martin Pasko, Max Allan Collins, Dan Jurgens, Dan Spiegle, Rick Burchett, and Terry Beatty. Senior Editor Mike Gold oversees the weekly, with individual editors responsible for specific features.

"We are firmly committed to ACTION COMICS WEEKLY," Says Ms Kahn, "we have a rich history to draw from to make this a superior comic and we have the experience and expertise to produce this monumental title. ACTION COMICS started it all 50 years ago. We are proud to begin this new era with ACTION, our flagship title."

ACTION COMICS WEEKLY #601 will debut sometime in the Spring of 1988. DC Comics will announce the date soon.

SUPERMAN Twice a month!

With the landmark publishing move putting ACTION COMICS on a weekly schedule, DC Comics has announced that it will begin publishing SUPERMAN on a new schedule.

Beginning with SUPERMAN #19, this title will be appearing in comic shops and newsstands twice monthly. Superman fans will now be able to read stories by John Byrne, and enjoy his artwork inked by two artists: Karl Kesel and John Beatty twice a month. Beatty will be inking all odd numbered issues, and Kesel will ink all even numbered issues.

Editor Mike Carlin has leaked information about an all-new SUPERGIRL who will be featured in the semimonthly SUPERMAN title.

All titles except TM are registered trademarks of DC Comics Inc © 1987

The Man of Steel as rendered by Mike Mignola, in **Superman #18**

earlier? That's right. You guessed it! As of issue **#20**, ***Superman*** will be published *semi-monthly* (shipping on the second and fourth weeks of each month)!! Now that the Man of Steel will only appear as a two-page center spread in ***Action Comics Weekly***, a second issue of ***Superman*** will replace ***Action*** on Mike Carlin and John Byrne's schedule. When ***Superman*** goes semi-monthly, Karl Kesel will remain as inker on the odd-numbered issues (does that make him an odd inker?), while John Beatty joins the team as Byrne's embellisher on the even-numbered issues.

But what about those Superman team-ups that headlined ***Action Comics*** from **#584-600**? Carlin assures us that the Man of Steel will continue to join forces with other super-stars from the DC firmament, but those pairings will now occur in both ***Superman*** and ***Adventures of Superman***. Utilizing this new method, the team-ups will never be forced simply to meet a monthly deadline, and Jerry Ordway will also get the chance to illustrate many of them. Carlin adds that we will probably see one crossover per month.

A major storyline involving Superman's arch-foe (or in the new continuity, I should say *rival*) Lex Luthor may appear in 1988. Partially inspired by Wall Street's disastrous crash on October 19, 1987 ("Black Monday"), Byrne and Carlin are toying with the idea of stripping Luthor of his financial empire. Gee, the poor guy's already lost his hair, and now he may lose his fortune!

Looking ahead to the summer, ***Superman Annual #2*** will be written by Roger Stern, pencilled by Ron Frenz, and inked by Joe Sinnott. Now *that's* a marvelous creative team! —ME—

SWAMP THING

Written and pencilled by RICK VEITCH. Inked by ALFREDO ALCALA, edited by KAREN BERGER.

32 four-color pages, $1.25, monthly from DC COMICS, INC. (Mature Readers)

The saga of the Sprout—the designated soul for Swamp Thing's replacement as earth elemental—continues.

Swamp Thing #71, shipping in late December, is the first of four horror stories about "people who are undergoing the Alex Holland treatment" in attempts to give the Sprout a body. The stories, which will run through **#74**, will be told from the viewpoint of the victims themselves, says writer-penciller Rick Veitch.

The story in **#71**, titled "Fear of Flying," focuses on an airline passenger who dies in a crash and is reborn as a possible plant elemental. "One thing Alan [Moore] established way, way back in the early Parliament of Trees stuff," Veitch explains, "is that one of the threads of coincidence that ties all these entities together is some of them were pilots who died in airplanes and burned. So I took that one more step and made him an airline passenger. The story really gets into the fear that you have when you're getting on an airplane. I played it up for all it was worth." However, the effort is a failure.

Each of the tales told in **#72-74** also result in failures to birth a "new Swamp Thing," which, counting the previously failed attempts with Solomon Grundy in **#67** and the terrorist in **#69-70**, means there have been six unsuccessful attempts to find the Sprout a suitable form.

Swamp Thing, Constantine, and Abby are monitoring the attempts. Through his network of magicians, adepts and sensitives, Constantine is able to know in advance when and where the incidents will occur. "And Swamp Thing's job is to try and wrestle the soul into the body that's created," says Veitch.

Each successive failure is causing guilt and questions about the morality of what's happening for the three of them. "A life is being lost each time they fail and they have to address that among themselves," Veitch says. "It causes a great tension between them, building and building over each issue."

One of the problems they have to face is each time there's a failure, the soul of the Sprout becomes "more twisted up and wrecked. He gets crazier and crazier, so one of the problems as we get toward issues **#74** and **75** is even if they get him into a body, what's he going to be like? He's just kind of maddened by all these little bits of life that he's subjected to and then ripped out of."

At the end of **#74**, Constantine quits the trio because of what's happened. He lays the blame for the successive failures on Abby, due to her heritage as a direct descendant of Arcane. "There's something about her that's screwing things up," says Veitch. "I wouldn't want to call it an aura or something. It's just her lineage has a way of touching upon these events."

(An interesting note: **#74** will feature a guest appearance of "White Line Fever," a character Alan Moore introduced in his two-part ***Vigilante*** story several years ago.)

By the beginning of **#75**, Swamp Thing is facing "an absolutely insoluble problem. But he has to solve it. He's got the Parliament of Trees behind him, who don't want him to live any more. They want him to join them, because there can't be two elementals that exist, supposedly. And then the soul of new seed is in rough shape, because of what it's had to go through. So what he does is he evolves a giant vegetable brain and thinks his way out of the problem."

Veitch sees **#75** as similar to Moore's classic "Rite of Spring" story. "We're going to go through all these big concepts. We're going to establish the Alec Holland/Swamp Thing's history and put it in a much larger perspective. It's going to lay out a lot of things that have been touched on and played with,

Swords of Texas pencils by Ben Dunn.

but never fully established. And it will make the 'vegetable universe' that Swamp Thing is part of a much more coherent place. It will also kick off the next year's worth of adventures. It would be a good place for peple who haven't been reading the book to get in on it."

In the following issue (**#76**), Swamp Thing's replacement—the next plant elemental—is finally created. Veitch refused to discuss the story any further, but promised, "We've got something great planned."

Throughout the next six months, the book's art team should remain consistent, with Alfredo Alcala inking Veitch's pencils and Tatjana Wood coloring. Tom Yeates will continue to ink Veitch's covers, but at least one cover (probably **#71**) will be painted by Dave McKean, who's doing the covers for ***Hellblazer***.

Although not scheduled until later in the year, Alan Moore's and Michael Gilbert's Swamp Thing-Mr. Monster team-up is still in the works. And set for sometime in the summer is ***Swamp Thing Annual #4***, featuring a Batman-Swamp Thing crossover written by former ***Swamp Thing*** penciller Steve Bissette. —BE—

SWIFTSURE

Written and illustrated by VARIOUS; edited by ROB SHARP

32 black-and-white pages, $1.95; bi-monthly from HARRIER COMICS

Harrier's longest running title continues to run *Lone Shark* over the coming six months, and concludes Nigel Kitching's *Morningstar* in issue **#19**.

Night Porter, the '50s super-heroine pastiche written by Rob Sharp and drawn by Art Wetherell, is temporarily retired in issue **#18**, when she encounters Madame Sin, who wishes her no good at all. Loosely based on a person recently in the news in England, Madame Sin is Sharp's latest addition to a rogue's gallery for Night Porter. He also writes *Lone Shark*, drawn by Geoff Harold, and freely admits that the character has certainly crossed the boundary that separates anti-hero from outright villain. Not to worry, though, if you're a Comics Code supporter, because Lone Shark will be receiving his come-uppance. Prometheus is a new character for the series appearing from the future to inform Lone Shark of his impending death, and also lurking is his old enemy Doctor Dark.

Two new series debut in issue **#19**: *Death, Inc.* and *First Eclipse*. The former, by Sharp and Glenn Fleming, introduces a hit man named James Raven whose career takes a turn for the worse when an old gent in a cloak and hood consistently reaches Raven's contracts and dispatches them before him. Sharp enigmatically claims that the story will go around the world to death's door and beyond, and also ties in with the *Forest* strip that ran in earlier issues.

First Eclipse is a children's adventure story written by Patrick Ri__s and drawn by Wetherell in which an orphan with an overactive imagination becomes involved in a post-nuclear future on another world. —FPI—

SWORD OF THE ATOM SPECIAL

Written by JAN STRNAD; pencilled by PAT BRODERICK; inked by DENNIS JANKE; edited by MICHAEL CARLIN

48 four-color pages, $1.50; newsstand distribution; every once in a while from DC COMICS INC.

Holy mixed genres! Jan Strnad's unique super-hero/sword-and-sorcery redo of the Atom veers into horror in a "Night of the Living Dead" type story for its third and final issue, according to editor Michael Carlin. An experiment of the Atom's accidentally spreads a plague to the inhabitants of the Colombian jungle he inhabits. "People are dying right and left," says Carlin, "and if that wasn't bad enough, they don't stay dead. They come back to get him."

Sword of the Atom Special #3, on sale in February, features artwork by Pat Broderick, replacing Gil Kane. Then, a few months later, The Atom gets his own regular book, which will re-mold him back into a more traditional super-hero. —EON—

SWORDS OF TEXAS

Written by CHUCK DIXON; illustrated by BEN DUNN; edited by TIM TRUMAN

4-issue limited series, 32 four-color pages, $1.75; monthly from ECLIPSE COMICS

The last two issues of ***Swords of Texas*** will appear in 1988. ***Swords of Texas*** is one of the two mini-series (the other being *New America*) designed as a bridge for the four-month leave of absence Tim Truman took from his book, *Scout*.

Swords of Texas is written by Chuck Dixon of ***Airboy*** and ***Strike!*** fame, and the artwork is being done by frequent Truman collaborator Ben Dunn. It is best described as all-out action, concerning the exploits of the band of smugglers know as The Swords of Texas, as they transport goods and arms in armored convoys to the Southwestern Free States rebels. Most of the action takes place in Communist Mexico. Within the panorama which is *Scout*, this series establishes the relationship between Japan and Russia and exactly what foothold they have in Mexico. In Truman's world our country is at odds with Canada as well, so the U.S. is actually surrounded by unfriendly powers. In addition, the Legion of Man is also involved. Truman promises a lot of action with ambushes, dirty deals, midnight convoys in the desert and armored tank battles.

In the back-up will be Beau LaDuke adventures, written by Beau Smith, and drawn by Flint Henry. In this tale, Beau joins his long lost and very colorful brothers on the road to West Virginia where they hope to help Daddy LaDuke fend off the 7-11 Megacorp from taking over Daddy's rundown amusement park. Truman describes the story as "rough and tumble, comedic action/adventure." A lot of the guest stars will be actual 4Winds people.

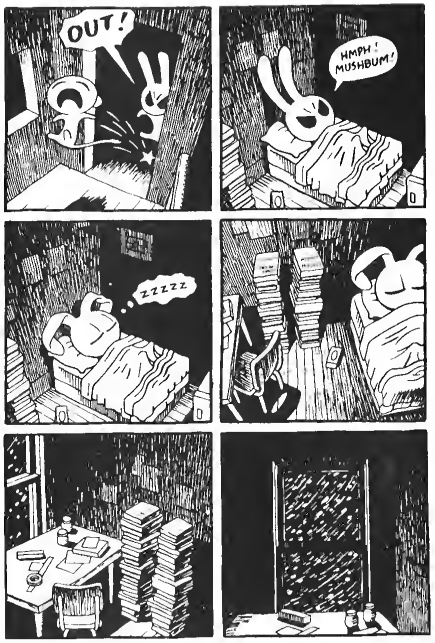
Scout, the character, will return in March, 1988 under the new title ***Scout: War Shamans*** immediately following the end of this series. —ES—

SYSTEM 7

Written by MARK WINFREY and RALPH GRIFFITH; pencilled by MARK WINFREY; inked by TIMOTHY MARTIN; edited by STUART KERR and RALPH GRIFFITH

32 black-and-white pages, $1.50; quarterly from ARROW COMICS

The good news is, System 7 gets to battle the Second Generation; the bad news is, afterward ***System 7*** may be banished to comic book purgatory. While issues **#3** and **4** of this book have been contacted out, co-editor Stuart Kerr says he's not sure where ***System 7*** will go from there. "Mark Winfrey has another project on the drawing board," reports Kerr... but that's all he'll say for now about this proposed new venture. —JH—



Taboo horror from Yummy Fur creator Chester Brown.

TABOO

Written and illustrated by VARIOUS; packaged by STEVE BISSETTE and JOHN TOTLEBEN

160 black-and-white pages; squarebound; $9.00; irregularly from AARDVARK ONE INTERNATIONAL (Mature Readers)

Originally planned for release by Halloween, a delay on one of the contributed stories has resulted in ***Taboo***'s rescheduling to a February or March release.

Packagers Bissette and Totleben, however, took advantage of the delay and incorporated into their horror anthology book some material planned for a second volume that had already been turned in. Bissette also found the time to illustrate a second story for the book, now set at a firm 160 pages.

Included are a story by Alan Moore and Bill Wray, one from former Warren writer Jack Butterworth and British artist Cam Kennedy, a collaboration between Mike Baron and Totleben, two stories drawn by Bissette (one he wrote himself, the other by Steve Perry), and a piece by Keith Giffen and Robert Loren Fleming. Also contributing were Charles Vess, Bernie Mireault, underground comix artists S. Clay Wilson and Greg Irons, Mike Hoffman, Charles Burns, Chester Brown, Eddie Campbell, Cara Sherman-Tereno, and newcomers Tom Sniegoski and David Marshall. Horror writer Clive Barker wrote the introduction to the book, and Bissette, Dave Sim, and Tom Veitch wrote the introductions to the individual stories.

Writer-artist Sherman-Tereno, who has drawn ***Atom*** and ***Evangeline***, contributed the longest piece in the book—some 30 pages. Giffen and Loren Fleming received the packagers award for the most revolting story. Bissette says, "Their story really did it to us! It's done it to everyone who's looked at it!

"As you can tell from our lineup, we're reaching outside of the mainstream comics community and we're starting to involve people who write horror fiction, people who work in other media who have an interest in the genre. We're really looking to keep ***Taboo*** on the cutting edge.

"Our whole basis is we're looking to break the mold. Horror comics since 1954 have fallen in the footsteps of the EC comics, either deliberately, such as ***Twisted Tales***, where Bruce Jones' intentions were certainly honorable, or just as a matter of commercial rote. Even the pap like ***House of Mystery*** were still basically the EC formula boiled down to tasteless broth. We're looking to shatter that mold completely.

"What we're looking to do is embrace the spirit that those comics embodied in 1954. Back then they were subversive and they were original and they were shocking, but all that has been lost.

"We're putting out red carpets to people who have been doing their own work, who obviously fall within the genre or touch on it enough that John and I felt the need to reach them. But their work hasn't been appearing in so-called horror comics. It's been appearing in independent magazines, it's been appearing in books like ***RAW*** or ***Yummy Fur***. No one who has been doing a horror anthology has really put any thought into rethinking the possibilities and the perimeters of the genre now that it's 1987."

Taboo will be squarebound, with an

embossed color cover designed by Totleben. "It's going to be exactly the size and format, sans color, of the *Swamp Thing* book," adds Bissette, "which is completely accidental." (Bissette and Totleben were the art team on *Swamp Thing* during Alan Moore's tenure on it.)

The book will be free of any advertising. "The only thing that might be construed as an ad, and it's not really, is we are donating two pages to information about and an illustration from Dennis Kitchen's benefit portfolio for Friendly Frank's." Part of the reason for running the information is as a service to retailers, Bissette says, letting them know they do have someplace to turn if they run into any kind of trouble in selling *Taboo*, which will not carry any kind of "adult" labeling. "The book is named *Taboo*. The cover graphic is going to make it very clear this isn't *Bambi*. It's not an explicit or pornographic cover graphic, but the cover is disturbing to look at. It's clear that this is an adult horror book."

The book will sell through the mail for $9.00 plus mailing costs. "We're selling it with roughly the same system that Dave's using for *High Society*, *Church and State*, and *Cerebus*," explains Bissette. "There are going to be three box sizes, ranging from one copy per box for individual customers up to 50 copies per box for retailers. There will be some sort of discount with those 50 copies; you're not paying $9.00 per copy."

Bissette and Totleben are still discussing with publisher Sim how they will deal with the distributors, if at all. "Dave's attitude right now is we're going to piss off the distributors anyway," laughs Bissette. "What we're leaning towards is simply going with the publicity that we're mounting now, putting out our own eye-catching ads when the book is printed and ready, and letting that gain its own momentum. If the book becomes something the retailers are able to move, then it's likely at some point that certain distributors will want to carry copies to supply to their retailers. But that's entirely their decision. We're not courting the distributors."

There will be no cover price printed on *Taboo*. "That leaves the retailer the option of selling it for, say $9.95 (or higher) if they want to."

Although there had been earlier discussions of a signed, limited-edition hardcover, those plans have fallen by the wayside. "Our whole attitude with this is to make this material available to anyone who wants it, at a reasonable price."

There has been some discussion with a major publisher of producing a mass market edition of *Taboo* a year or two from now. "I hesitate to talk too much about this," says Bissette, "because I just don't know if it's a reality. I don't even know if we really want to go that route." He notes that Sim is planning to keep the book in print indefinitely.

Advertising for the book will be geared towards two markets—comics fans and horror fans. Ads and articles will appear not only in the *Comics Buyer's Guide*, *The Comics Journal* and *Amazing Heroes*, but also in the horror press. "*Fangoria* is giving us a full page write-up in their January issue. And we're also hoping to get ads or articles into magazines like *Twilight Zone*, the science fiction pulps, the mystery pulps. We are making an active effort to reach outside the comics market. I think a lot of our readership might be people who've never set foot into a comics shop."

Plans are already underway for a second book, to appear by the end of 1988, hopefully.

Already in the works for *Taboo #2* are stories by Chester Brown, Jack Butterworth, Doug Wheeler, Mark Burbey and Bill Wray, Tom Veitch, Bissette and Totleben. "Our plum so far for the second issue is the first comics story written by Michael McDowell, a very well-known paperback writer. And it's being drawn by Tim Burton, the director of *Pee-wee's Big Adventure*."

If the two *Taboo* books do well, promised Bissette, "we will continue until we die, the interest fades or Dave Sim pulls the plug. My hope is, if it's a success, that it doesn't stop here and end with us. I'd like to see similar rethinking in other genres. We've chosen to do it with horror, because that's the bent of our nature. I'd love to see somebody give it a try with erotica or with romance comics, westerns, anthologies!" —BE—

Life in the Peace Corps, as told in Tales From the Heart.

TAILGUNNER JOE

Written by PETER GILLIS; pencilled by TOM ARTIS; inked by UNDETERMINED; edited by UNDETERMINED

32 four-color pages, price and frequency UNDETERMINED; from DC COMICS, INC.

The preview that wouldn't die! After far too long a time, Gillis finally signed a deal for this book with DC. That's about all we know this time around, consult the previous previews for plot content on this book, I'm tired of copying it from preview to preview. —JW—

TALES FROM THE HEART

Written by CINDY GOFF and RAFAEL NIEVES; illustrated by SEITU HAYDEN; edited by ALAN PAYNE

15-issue limited series; 24 black-and-white pages, $1.75; bi-monthly from ENTROPY ENTERPRISES

Tales from the Heart follows the adventures of Cathy Grant, a naive young woman from middle America who sets out to save the world via the Peace Corps. She finds herself in Central Africa, where her views of the world and the people in it are challenged daily. *Tales* takes the reader along for a sometimes funny, sometimes sad, always eventful ride through a new country and a new culture.

Issue #3 finds Cathy beginning her new life in Boguila, her work village. She meets many of the unique characters who will be a part of her life for the next two years, and says good-bye to the women who have become her constant companions through her first months in Africa.

In issue #4, Cathy, Jim and Brenda are faced with a raging brush fire which threatens their village.

Issue #5 has Cathy, Brenda and Jim working harder than they ever thought possible as they struggle with their first attempts at giving vaccinations to small children. In the process, they learn valuable lessons in hand to hand combat and crowd control.

Witchcraft and superstition are the subjects of issue #6, as Cathy and Brenda witness the power of the beliefs of the people of Boguila.

Cathy's life is in danger in issue #7 as she falls ill during the harmattan, a sand storm which blows from the Sahara, rendering useless transportation to a modern hospital.

TALES OF THE BEANWORLD

Written, drawn and published by LARRY MARDER

32 black-and-white pages, $2.00; seasonally from ECLIPSE COMICS

Tales of the Beanworld #s 9 and 10 presage the patter of little legumes in the Beanworld, following Gran'Ma'Pa's peculiar behavior in #8.

Issue #9 is called 'A Gift? A Gift Comes!," explains Beanworld scribe Larry Marder. "Everybody knows a gift's coming, but nobody knows what it's gonna be or when it will arrive. The only person who knows is Beanish, because his muse tells him. [But] he can't tell anybody else that he knows what's going on because he can't tell them where he found out.' The issue is filled with tension and wild surmises about the nature of the gift. And what is the gift? Well, the working title of #10 is "Happy Birthday, Baby Beans!"

"We'll see the whole birth process and growing process start. Issue #10 is really the end of the first cycle of Beanworld." Yes, the end. A new generation is starting out and we'll see "the kind of things that happen when wild crazy children come along that older people don't understand.

"They're definitely not the same [kind of bean]. Some of these beans are going to grow up and now want to be Chow-soljers. And these beans are going to grow up in a world where the Float Factor is there from the day they're born and it's not some newfangled idea. They're going to actually be the generation that can come along and make use of Proffy's inventions. They're more advanced beans."

Of course, we'll also see more developments in the relationship of Beanish and his muse and the inner workings of Professor Garbanzo's Fix-it Shop. But the growth and evolution of the Beanworld is the big story. Indeed, Marder reveals that when the story of the Beanworld finally ends, Bean civilization will have progressed to the state of huge cities and thousands of beans. *Beanworld* is very much the story of the advance of a culture from the primitive to a true civilization.

"But there will be some beans that will resist it very heavily. They won't want anything to do with [technology], but it can't be helped. The Float Factor is a superior technology to what they had before. And historically, when a superior technology comes up against a more primitive one, the superior one always wins. Always. You can see [the conflicts] already starting between Mr. Spook and Beanish." —HMacD—

TALES OF G.I. JOE

Written by LARRY HAMA; illustrated by VARIOUS; edited by BOB HARRAS

32 four-color pages, $1.50; monthly from MARVEL COMICS GROUP

Tales of G.I. Joe reprints the hard-to-find early issues of *G.I. Joe* in a deluxe, Baxter format. Issues #5-10 will be reprinted in the first half of 1988.

TALES OF THE TEEN TITANS

Written by MARV WOLFMAN and PAUL LEVITZ; pencilled by EDUARDO BARRETO; inked by ROMEO TANGHAL; edited by MARK WAID

32 four-color pages, $1.00; monthly from DC COMICS, INC.

The last of the hardcover/softcover books, *Tales of the Teen Titans* continues to reprint the *New Teen Titans* stories a year after they happen. Although it will be cancelled soon, here's a rundown.

In #88, The Titans assembled attack the Church of Blood with Robotman, as Brother Blood is resurrected by Raven on national TV. Cover is by Mike Collins. The story continues in #89, wherein the Titans are defeated by Blood, Raven, and Nightwing, just as Frances Kane begins to summon a cavalry. All this beneath a cover by Rob Liefeld and George Perez.

Under a Mike Barr/Mark Beachum cover on #90, Nightwing breaks Blood's mental control, Arella is rescued by Robin and Frances Kane, Superman, Batman, the Green Lanterns, Booster Gold, and Infinity, Inc. show up to help against Brother Blood. The battle against Blood concludes in #91, wherein all the assembled heroes must stop Blood's almost total takeover of the world. Happy endings are had by almost all, as the Titans return to New York. The cover for this, the last issue of the series, is by George Perez! —AM—

New Beans are coming to Beanworld.

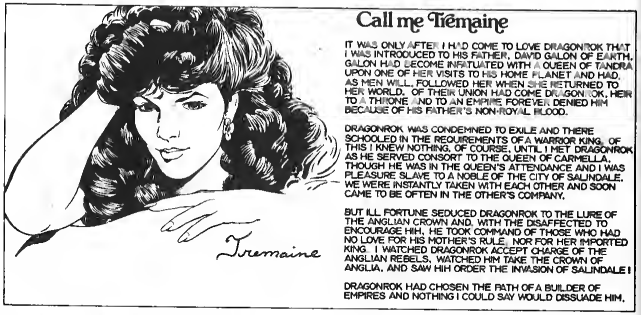
TALES OF THE TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES

Written and illustrated by JIM LAWSON and RYAN BROWN; edited by KEVIN EASTMAN and PETER LAIRD

32 black-and-white pages, $1.50; bi-monthly from MIRAGE STUDIOS

In *Tales* #4 our heroes, with Casey Jones, will confront a monster in an abandoned warehouse. Jim Lawson is writing all of the even-numbered issues.

That leaves the odd issues for Brown to script. His fifth issue will herald the return of Dr. Baxter, with more hungry robots. —EV—



Tandra: The ol' Prince Valiant copy-art ratio.

TANDRA

Written and illustrated by HANTHER

32 black-and-white pages, $1.95; irregularly from HANTHERCRAFT PUBLICATIONS

Tandra has been running in one form or another since 1969, when Hanther began it as a comic-art-s-f serial in his fanzine, ***Critter***. By 1976 the rest of ***Critter*** had faded away, and Hanther started packaging ***Tandra*** in "graphic album" format. Other black-and-white independent comics have come and gone, but ***Tandra*** is still chugging away on its first serialized adventure.

Tandra is a maverick in several respects. It's about the final adventure comic that is still being produced in the old Hal Foster *Prince Valiant/Tarzan* format, with text and dialogue below the picture in each panel, instead of speech balloons. Hanther prefers the European graphic album package to the American comic-book package. Most of the ***Tandra*** saga consists of over 500 numbered pages, published in eight separately-titled books of 48 pages each. It's been the slowest-appearing title for most of its career, with only one new book per year.

Book 9, ***Andelkrag***, grew out of control and destroyed this routine. Hanther is publishing it in three separate parts of 32 pages each. ***Andelkrag I*** (Book 9A) is already out, ***Andelkrag II*** (9B) will be out by the end of 1987, and ***Andelkrag III*** (9C) will appear in Spring 1988. ***Andelkrag*** will be followed by Book 10, ***Ringfall***, "the long-awaited wrap-up of the initial ***Tandra*** saga which will bring the first cycle to close, resolving most of the various plot threads and answering most of the questions raised so far about the Tandra universe."

David Gallon, the Earthman adventurer on the world of Tandra, and the hero up to now, has finally met his match in his now-adult bastard son, Dragonrok. ***Andelkrag*** is the story of how the restless young Dragonrok is manipulated into leading a war of conquest to "liberate" Tandra. After conquering Anglia and proclaiming his empire, Dragonrok marches against Salindale, David's adopted city. David is seriously and permanently wounded as he leads Salindale's unsuccessful defense. Dragonrok's complete victory is thwarted, however, as David manages to evacuate the city and retreat to Andelkrag, one of the super-scientific islands floating through Tandra's skies. Dragonrok's troubles are compounded when the insane Prophet of Lord Iao seizes control back in Anglia and tries to turn the new empire into an oppressive religious dictatorship. By the end of ***Andelkrag***, the entire social order of Tandra which has been established in the first eight books will have been destroyed, and some major characters will have died.

In addition to the eleven ***Tandra*** albums so far (books 1 through 8 and 9A, 9B and 9C), there is a *Dragonrok* 45 rpm record for $2.50.

—FPs—

TEEN TITANS SPOTLIGHT

Written by MARK EVANIER and SHARMAN DIVONO; illustrated by DAN SPIEGLE; edited by BARBARA RANDALL

32 four-color pages, 75 cents; newsstand distribution; monthly from DC COMICS INC.

Boy, these ***Teen Titans*** titles are dropping like flies, aren't they? Preceding ***Tales of the Teen Titans*** to the grave is ***Teen Titans Spotlight***, which will have only one more issue, in January.

Issue #21, by Mark Evanier, Sharman DiVono, and Dan Spiegle, will tell an untold tale of the original Teen Titans, when they were just young uns. The original four youths, Robin, Wonder Girl, Kid Flash, and Aqualad must stop a crook from robbing Woodstock. Mark Evanier says that "Sharman and I were supposed to co-write the story, but since she had such a great idea for the story, she wrote most of it." O.K.

The *Spotlight*'s off and the stage is bare (Gosh, what a melodramatic ending phrase!)

—AM—

TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES

Written, illustrated and edited by KEVIN EASTMAN and PETER LAIRD

32 black-and-white pages; $1.50; bi-monthly from MIRAGE STUDIOS

Casey Jones plays a private eye in ***#14's*** story. It will be a spoof of 1950s detective movies. That issue is written by Kevin Eastman, who is alternating the creative chores with Peter Laird every issue.

The next two issues are not written yet, but Eastman will be collaborating with either Eric Talbot or Mark Bode on ***#16***.

—EV—

THEO THE DINOSAUR

Written and illustrated by PHIL YEH

32 full-color pages; $2.50; quarterly from FRAGMENTS WEST

Theo the Dinosaur—you may not know the name, but you've probably seen the poster or the billboard or the t-shirt. Theo is the saurian you see in libraries reading with the logo "Avoid Extinction—READ" and he's going to be starring in his own comic book starting this winter. The very busy, yet very speedy, Phil Yeh writes and draws the book; it's going to be the first full-color book from Fragments West.

Each page is actually a painting. Not a watercolor, or an overlay or anything like that, but an actual oil painting on canvas. Yeh plans to sell the original paintings when an issue is finished, all in the name of literacy. And what creative challenges does he find in this, his first process color comic? "There's no difference; it's just expensive as hell!"

The story concerns a bunch of dinosaurs who use a computer and a modem to discover their own impending extinction and escape to the future—and since none of the other dinosaurs care about reading, Theo and friends are the only dinosaurs to survive the coming of the dreadful comet—conclusive proof that it was actually *illiteracy* which caused the end of the age of the giant lizards. Will Americans be next on the extinct list? Not if they buy enough copies of this book. But you gotta actually *read* the darned thing.

Remember: reading is FUNdamental!!

—HMacD—

THOR

Written by TOM DeFALCO; pencilled by RON FRENZ; inked by BRETT BREEDING; edited by RALPH MACCHIO

32 four-color pages; 75 cents; newsstand distribution; monthly from MARVEL COMICS GROUP

Asgard is under siege by the forces of Seth, the Serpent God of Death. Balder and his legions are defending the Eternal Realm, but they need the power of Thor. Hogun the Grim is sent to Earth.

But the new method of getting to Earth sends Hogun into a psychotic state, and he runs wild through the streets of New York. The only one to stop him is Daredevil, the Man Without Fear.

Before Thor and Hogun find each other, Thor will face two new foes. The Mongoose is a villain who is both very fast and very strong. Thor defeats the Mongoose with the aid of the Amazing Spider-Man, and the tale will foretell of things to come throughout the Marvel universe.

Thor also meets Quicksand, a female version of the Sandman who is more evil than he ever was.

Finally, Thor will learn of the threat to Asgard and will face Seth.

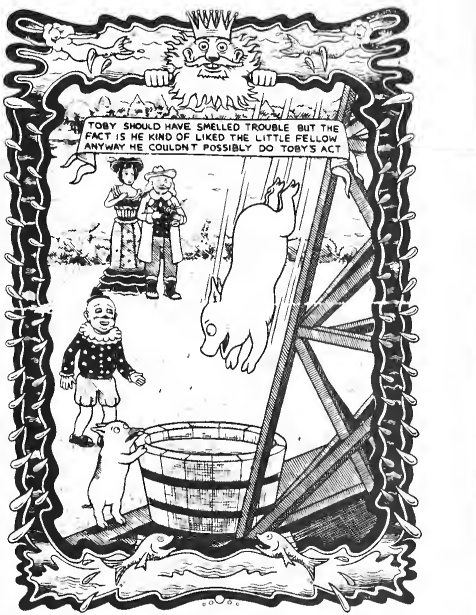
THOSE ANNOYING POST BROTHERS

Written and illustrated by MATT HOWARTH; edited by PATRICIA JERES

32 black-and-white pages; $1.75; bi-monthly from VORTEX COMICS

Yesssir! The only characters in comics who make Reid Fleming look like a wimp! Howarth declares ***#9*** to be a "Disturb the Neighbors" issue. In it, Ron and Russ discover that they have that most dreaded of all lifeforms... neighbors!! Needless to say, this does not please them. It's time to take action. Or so they think. The neighbors' house, you see, is owned by Big Al, and is protected by safety spells, so that no harm may come to it. The challenge, then, is to get the neighbors *out* since the brothers can't get *in*. Issue ***#10*** is the beginning of a four-parter with the overall title of "Shell Game." It starts with a chapter titled "A Death in the Family." Ron and Russ accept a contract to pilfer a very valuable opal. In the midst of completing the contract, Russ is confronted by a demon who commences to gnaw on him. By issue's end, Russ is dead. In ***#11***, Russ re-grows. Remember, in Bugtown, death is an inconvenience, at worst! However, we discover a unique facet to the rebirth properties in Bugtown: it's rather like Xeroxing a Xerox, in that each new generation of copy is not as complete as the previous one. This time out, things mess up royally, as Russ assimilates some of the Demon-saliva in his system, and becomes... nasty. Even nastier than Ron!! You'll have to read the next preview (or better yet, the series itself) to see how it all turns out.

—JW—



Kim Deitch gets weirder in The 3-D Zone Presents #14: No Business Like Show Business.

THE 3-D ZONE PRESENTS

Written and illustrated by VARIOUS; edited by RAY ZONE

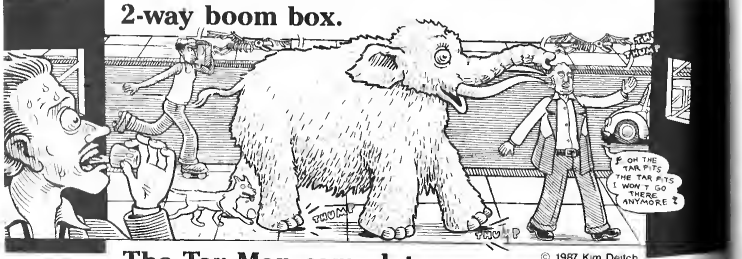
32 3-D pages; $2.50; monthly from RAY ZONE (distributed by RENEGADE)

In the land of the blind the one eyed man is king, but he won't know what to make of 3-D comics.

At any rate, the first 1988 issue of ***The 3-D Zone Presents*** will commemorate the upcoming election year with *The 3-D Presidents*, featuring many rare and historic 3-D photographs of presidents. Wouldn't Nixon's nose look scary in a 3-D photo? There will also be two comic stories, the maritime tale "Submarine—in 1776" and "House Divided," an epic of the Civil war.

Issue ***#13*** leaps on the Flash Gordon bandwagon with 30 Alex Raymond *Flash Gordon* pages (the famous 1936 "Water

Myles Mycroft looked up one day and saw Larry Farrel being followed by a giant mastodon, a ghostly canine, a skeletal bird, and a kid on roller skates with a 2-way boom box.



© 1987 Kim Deitch

The Tar Man came later.
Kim Deitch's Macabre Masterpiece. . .

HOLLYWOODLAND

A graphic novel from the company committed to excellence.

Thank the heavens somebody collected Kim Deitch's HOLLYWOODLAND serial! Of course I want a copy. Enclosed is $9.95, please send my postpaid copy without delay.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ **State** _____ **Zip** _____

Send to: FANTAGRAPHICS BOOKS ● 1800 Bridgegate Street ● Ste. 101 ● Westlake, CA 91361

Please allow 4 to 6 weeks for delivery ● Check or money order only, please don't send cash

*It's wedding bells for **Thunderbunny**, with a few special guests.*

World of Mongo" sequence) given the 3-D treatment.

And **#14** is the first all-original, all comics issue of the year, as Kim (***Hollywoodland***) Deitch presents *No Business Like Show Business*, "the poignant and bizarre tale of Toby the Flying Pig, a legendary circus performer." Each page of this opus has been designed to look like a circus poster and this book will actually be in an innovative four-color 3-D technique.

***Thundercats**: No hairballs, we hope.*

THUNDERBUNNY

Written by MARTING GREIM, illustrated by BRIAN BUNIAK and GARY KATO; edited by WARP GRAPHICS

32 black-and-white pages, $1.75; bi-monthly from APPLE COMICS

What with the across-the-board sluggish Apple schedule, not a lot has changed since last time around. ***Thunderbunny* #11** is the T.H.U.N.D.E.R. Agents cross-over issue, and **#12** takes a look at a possible future for Thunderbunny, including his marriage!

THUNDERCATS

Written by GERRY CONWAY and GEORGE CARAGONNE; pencilled by JOSE DELBO, MARIE SEVERIN and ERNIE COLON; inked by AL WILLIAMSON; edited by DON DALEY

32 four-color pages, $1.00; newsstand distribution; bi-monthly from MARVEL COMICS GROUP

Exotic settings and bizarre menaces are in store for the ***Thundercats***, as they battle their evil doppelgangers, face danger under the sea, encounter the secret of the mechanical Thunderkittens, enter the Mirror of Mysteries, and valiantly attempt to free Jaga from the Astral Prison.

THUNDERMACE

Written by BOB KRAUS and STEVE SIMSHAUSER; illustrated by BOB KRAUS and RICK SELLERS

32 black-and-white pages; $1.75; quarterly from R.A.K. GRAPHICS

In its third year of publication, the story

ners its climax as the forces of humanity make their assault against the gathered demonic forces. The true nature of ThunderMace's enigmatic comrade-in-arms finally is revealed. Despite the stunning revelation ThunderMace must press the attack, knowing full well that should mankind succeed in vanquishing the vast demon armies, they must still face Yraegael, the ultimate demon-lord.

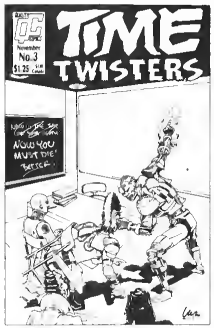
TIME TWISTERS

Written by ALAN MOORE; illustrated by VARIOUS; edited by BOB KEINAN

32 full-color pages; $1.25; monthly from QUALITY COMICS

Issue #5 teaches us three basic rules: 1) Don't travel through space if what you wanted to do was travel through time. 2) Be very careful how you talk to computers. And 3) Be wary of rats plotting the overthrow of the planet Earth. Cover by Bill Maher.

What if you could go back in time and discover you were related to someone famous? Find out Shakespeare wasn't the writer—he was cracked up to be? Change history from the comfort of your home? The answers to these and many more



Cover by Bill Maher.

questions are answered in issue #6. And a cover by Bill Maher, just in case you wondered.

In issue #7, a parallel universe has been found. Let's attack it! There's a road that leads to everywhere, let's take it! There's a cash reward for the capture of the first intelligent alien. Let's find it! More twisted time tales from the likes of Paul Neary, Mike McMahon, Jeff Anderson and many others. —MSM—

TO BE ANNOUNCED

Written by DEREK McCULLOCH; illustrated by MIKE HANNON; edited by RICK WILSON

32 black-and-white pages; $1.70; irregularly from STRAWBERRY JAM COMICS

The eighth *To Be Announced* is the all-movie-parody issue, paul-with-a-small-'p' Stockton wrote the reviews, and *then* McCulloch wrote the movies they covered. The movies featured in it run the gamut from *Griffith, Mayberry 1987*, which follows the *Dragnet* formula of updating an old TV show with lots of 1980s violence, to a John Hughes (*Pretty in Pink*) parody. Also on hand is an expansion on the badly-dubbed French art film that was the backup in *To Be Announced* #7 and *D.T.—The Dead Terrestrial*. "I've told people since the 'Dead Guy' issue that we would never bring him back," says McCulloch, "But this was too good to pass up."

Inverting the order that they were previewed in with the last *Preview Special* then, we find that #9 should be the "All Canadian" issue. "I suppose," begins McCulloch, "That Canadians read *Amazing Heroes* too. I might as well mention that the shows we'll be parodying are *Mister Dress-Up, The Friendly Giant, Hinterlands Who's Who* and almost definitely a Canadian awards show." —EV—

TOM AND JERRY

Written and illustrated by VARIOUS; edited by RICH MAURIZIO and JIM MAIN

28 full-color pages; $1.50; newsstand distribution; monthly from SPOTLIGHT COMICS

M-G-M's venerable cat and mouse rivals are making their long-overdue return to "funny" books as Spotlight Comics releases *Tom and Jerry* #1 in February. Debuting in 1940, Tom and Jerry have been seen in countless theatrical animated shorts (and occasionally in bermuda shorts), numerous TV program incarnations, comic books, and marketing bonanzas, and editor Jim Main is thrilled to have the duo join the line of Spotlight super-stars.

Tom and Jerry #1 features the popular pair in a 20-page slugfest written and pencilled by Kelley Jarvis and embellished by Bud Gordimier. The sad-eyed but lovable mutt Droopy will also appear in a back-up by Tony Bascilicato in the premiere issue, then spin off into his own bi-monthly title during the following month [*see the Droopy preview listing for further details*]. —ME—

TONY BRAVADO

Written by DAVE DARRIGO; illustrated by STEVE LEBLANC and LOUIS PARADIS

32 black-and-white pages; $2.00; bi-monthly from RENEGADE PRESS

Scheduled to hit the stands in July, *Tony Bravado* is yet another attempt by Renegade Press to keep crime comics alive.

Writer Dave Darrigo says that as far as he knows, "Renegade is the only

Another crime comic from Renegade: Tony Bravado

company currently publishing crime comics."

Readers may see some parallels with TV P.I. shows when they first encounter Tony Bravado but Darrigo says that his major influence on this book was the Travis McGee series by the late John D. MacDonald.

Like MacDonald, Darrigo will use this book to get a look at the morality/amorality of the "beautiful people" from the perspective of someone who works for them.

Tony Bravado is an Italian/American who is fluent in both Italian and English. Originally a cop in Italy, he became a detective after being promoted to the elite anti-terrorist force, sometime around the troubles with the Red Brigade.

For a time after he left the force, he was a bodyguard but gave that up after being wounded in action, again as a result of terrorism.

Now he has hooked with the Eden Resort Chain (which consists of a number of exclusive clubs and resorts). His employer is Lance Palmer, a Hugh Hefner figure who also publishes *Eden* Magazine, an erotic magazine aimed at couples. Each issue the centrefold features a couple who are real people (not models or porn stars). The magazine has come about as the result of the success of the clubs and resorts.

Tony becomes Palmer's private troubleshooter. He personally handles problems for Palmer and his friends.

As with Darrigo's other Renegade title, *Wordsmith*, simple description of the book's set-up is very superficial. Under the surface boil "the nastier lusts, emotions and problems of the idle rich. The book is outwardly cool, inwardly unsettled—just like the 'beautiful people' Bravado works for," says Darrigo.

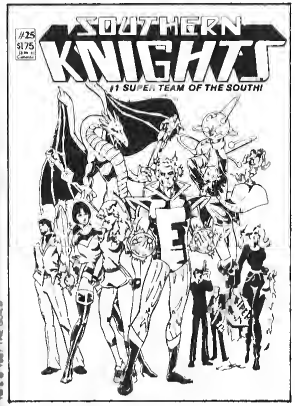
An avowed independent, who despised unions and communism, Bravado now finds himself exploring these deplored possibilities as he is continually exposed to the laissez-faire capitalism of those who now surround him. —SW—

SOUTHERN KNIGHTS™
A COMICS INTERVIEW PUBLICATION

Look for our distinctive logo — — to find titles you can trust!

FICTIONEER BOOKS, LTD. • 234 FIFTH AVE. • SUITE 301 • NEW YORK, NY 10001

25th ISSUE!



BY HENRY VOGEL — $1.75

Very few comics published today have ever seen issue #25 — or ever will! Featuring all the main characters from the first 25 issues of the *Southern Knights* — together! — in the pages of this celebration spectacular!

ORIGINS ALBUM

For old fans and new — collects the origins of Electrode, Connie, Kristin & Dragon! Plus all new material in this fourth volume about the Early Days of the Knights!

BY HENRY VOGEL — $4.95

TM & © 1987 THE GUILD

"• It's been a while since I've recommended *Southern Knights* (Comics Interview, $1.75 each) but my enthusiasm for it has not waned. I haven't a lot of space and time to spare, so let me just reiterate that this is a super hero team based in Atlanta, the writing is by the extremely able Henry Vogel and the very good art is by Willie Peppers, and that the outstanding member of this team is Dragon. Dragon is not a man who can turn into a dragon, he is a dragon who masquerades as a man. Check out this series, please. For the earliest issues, you will probably have to settle for *Early Days of the Southern Knights*, a series of graphic album reprints, since the very earliest issues of *SK* are hard, if not impossible, to locate."
—*Don Thompson*
COMICS BUYER'S GUIDE

A COMICS INTERVIEW PUBLICATION

TOTAL ECLIPSE

Written by MARV WOLFMAN, illustrated by UNDECIDED ON AT PRESS TIME, edited by FRED HUKE

6-issue mini-series; 32 full-color pages; $1.75; newsstand distribution; monthly from ECLIPSE COMICS

It's Eclipse's tenth anniversary, and they're going to throw a party to celebrate. Everyone (basically) from the entire line of books Eclipse has published is invited, but they may not like the entertainment. It seems something is threatening life on Earth as we know it, and it's up to the heroes to stop it. "This is going to be a much more realistic menace than any of the other menaces in other big series have had," says Eclipse editor cat yronwode.

Although the story has similarities to ***Crisis On Infinite Earths***, and many other company cross-over series, Eclipse promises something quite different with ***Total Eclipse***. "Readers have been asking for a lot of different characters to meet. We're having them meet, in this series, as well as several one-shot specials. Since these are creator-owned properties, we cannot force anyone to have their characters participate, but we're going to have as many as possible in the series."

To that extent, the book will star characters from ***Destroyer Duck***, ***Airboy***, the Heap, Skywolf, Valkyrie, ***New Wave***, ***Liberty Project***, and ***Miracleman***. A new, unnamed super-hero will also appear in the book, as a precursor to his regular series which will be plotted by Marv Wolfman and scripted by Len Wein. Possible other stars, not confirmed at press time include ***Man Of War***, the ***DNAgents*** (and related characters), ***Crossfire***, and the ***Prowler***.

"We're trying to have every character in every series, excepting mainly the Japanese books, and the ***Scout*** related books, appear in ***Total Eclipse***, but we can only ask the creators. If they don't want them there, we can't force them. There will not be a lot of cross-overs, as most of our reader feedback has stated that they do not want cross-overs, but they do want the characters to meet."

Two related specials will have Airboy teaming up with the modern-day Prowler, and the 1940s Air Fighters meeting Sgt. Strike. Also released this summer will be a humongous poster containing at least two characters from every regular comic ever published by Eclipse. The poster will be pencilled by Stan Woch, and inked by Tom Yeates.

—AM—

TOYBOY

Written by CARY BATES, pencilled by TREVOR VON EEDEN, inked by RUDY NEBRES

32 full-color pages; $2.00; newsstand distribution; bi-monthly from CONTINUITY GRAPHICS

"Toyboy finishes his adventures with the dirt bags in #3," says publisher Neal Adams, and #4 brings him face-to-face with a character which, if we could, legally, we'd call Toyman. He makes deadly robots in the mold of famous people from the Silver Screen and TV. And although we don't go into it in detail in the two-part story, the reason he does use these "persons" as models is so as to simplify the programming. By feeding vast amounts of available tapes and film of famous people into his robots as programming, he doesn't have to create original characteristics.

Toyboy's first suspect is a secret agent named John Shane, and his pursuit of this supposedly guilty agent takes him to Cape Canaveral, where the two of them fail to halt the launching of a satellite by the real villain, Dr. Mechman, who now threatens the world with stolen "Star Wars" technology.

The following issue, #5, is illustrated by Michael Golden. "The story is about a character we call around here 'The Time Bastard,' says Adams, "but whom we refer to in the story as Time Warrior. His machinations seem to insidious as to pale our feeling about most villains we've thus far encountered. With apparent abandon, he takes lives and creates disasters in this 'Time Game' of his. Toyboy is invited in and has no choice but to participate or by refusing, cause more harm! What can this frustrating, evil Time Bastard want?"

Toy Boy battles dirt bags and more

TRANSFORMERS

Written by BOB BUDIANSKY, pencilled by JOSE DELBO, inked by DAVE HUNT, edited by DON DALEY

32 four-color pages; $1.00; newsstand distribution; monthly from MARVEL COMICS GROUP

Continuing the saga of the ***Transformers*** (based on the top-selling Hasbro toy line), the Autobots face the new menace of the Pretenders. And if that isn't enough, Optimus Prime makes his long-awaited return, but not as a Transformer—he is now a Power Master.

TRANSFORMERS COMICS MAGAZINE

Written and illustrated by VARIOUS, edited by DON DALEY

64 four-color pages; $1.50; newsstand distribution; bi-monthly from MARVEL COMICS GROUP

The early days of the ***Transformers*** on Earth, and their battles with the Decepticons, are re-presented in ***Transformers Comics Magazine***. This Spring will see ***Transformers*** **#17-22** reprinted.

TRANSFORMERS IN 3-D

Written by ALFRED WILLIAMS, pencilled by DANTE FUSELI, inked by PHIL HAXO; edited by JOHN STEPHENSON and VICKI REICKMAN

32 3-D pages; $2.50; quarterly from BLACKTHORNE

January begins a three-part story involving war with the Destructons. (What's a Destructon, you may ask? And well you may.) These five powerful, other-dimensional beings have been trapped in a cosmic prison, and are none too pleased when released.

Lead by Imperious Delirious, they wage war on the Decepticons and Autobots with the results being... Well, I won't tell you. In fact, I don't know. Blackthorne promises something never tried before and never to be tried again. I guess I'll have to wait like the rest of you for the outcome of this one. —MM—

TRANSIT

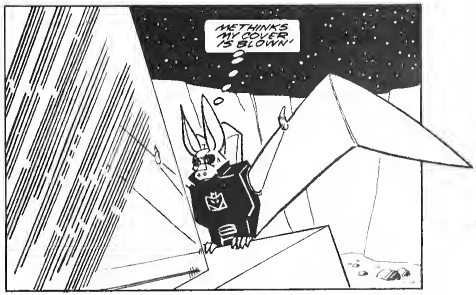
Written and illustrated by TED McKEEVER, edited by LOU STATHIS

24 black-and-white pages; $1.75; bi-monthly from VORTEX COMICS

In #4, if you recall, Spud was indoctrinated into Reverend Grisn's Church of the Slack. "He dresses nice, his hair is cut—he's kind of scary," says Ted McKeever. His involvement in the next issue is minor, as he travels with the rest of Grisn's "moonies" and makes speeches. Grisn and Boss Traun take center stage in a major discussion that reveals more of their motivations. It all leads into #6, which contains Grisn's last speech before the mayoral election. Meanwhile Joe Bone, the ex-con hit man, has been dispatched to assassinate the candidate by one of Traun's minor rivals. The bulk of the issue takes place on the elevated train platform Bone has chosen for his vigil. Somebody dies.

A piece of moralizing from Transit

In #7 Spud is brought into the seedier side of the city by Bone and deprogrammed. They link up with Rex, the pimp who had hired Bone. All goes well, considering, but Traun is an ever-present danger. He will remain a threat farther down the line. "I don't want it to be a book where the villain poses a threat that is dispersed later on. It usually goes, 'Well, whoops! He *almost* made it.' Again, ***Transit*** is a book where the villain is going to win at some point." The issue with Traun triumphant is most likely to fall between **#9** and **#12**, and will almost definitely be a full color issue. Watch this space for further developments. —RV—



Still more 3-D, this time with the Transformers

TREKKER

Written and illustrated by RON RANDALL, edited by RANDY STRADLEY

32 black-and-white pages; $1.75; bi-monthly from DARK HORSE COMICS

Issue #5 will conclude Mercy St. Clair's adventure in space, begun in issue #4. Mercy is travelling with her friend Paul and an agent from the Rigel Organization, to track down and confront some thieves who have stolen a doomsday device know as the Babel Cannon. Mercy is having enough trouble keeping peace between her travelling companions to last a lifetime, but that won't be very long unless she can find the the Babel Cannon.

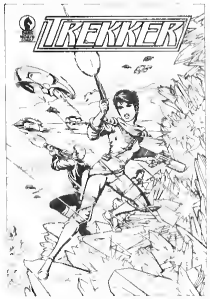
Mercy will reach Gamma 7 in issue #6 (well, I guess you now know she survived issue #5, huh?), hot on the trail of the other trekker who stole her bounty rewards and double-crossed her in issue #3. Roger Vincent is going to need all his wits, because Mercy's certainly being merciless in her hunt to find him.

Mercy returns to her home planet in issue #7, but aboard the spaceship, reminisces about her life. That's right, readers, it's origin time! Creator Ron Randall plans to reveal almost all of Mercy's past, including her training as a trekker, her family history, and a recounting of her first case.

Well, in issue #8, it's "Good Golly, Missing Molly!" Actually, that's only one of the many titles this loopy preview-er came up with while chatting with the aforementioned Mr. Ron Randall. It's true enough—Mercy's friend Molly is missing, with no clues as to her whereabouts, and Mercy has to find her. Mercy doesn't know whether she's looking for a hostage, a victim, a criminal, or a corpse, in this chapter of her life which could be entitled "the Case of the Missing Molly," but which won't be throwaway in ***Trekker*** though. Hopefully the revelations will just be an added bonus to the fact that there have been good stories going along the whole time."

—AM—

"All of these stories are still leading up to a point," says creator/writer/artist Ron Randall. "A few issues from now we'll start to open up to see exactly what the 'Big Picture' is. There's nothing



Trekker *leads up to a point this year*

TROLLORDS

Written and illustrated by SCOTT BEADERSTADT and PAUL FRICKE, edited by LEN STRAZEWSKI

32 black-and-white pages; $1.50; monthly (sort of) from TRU STUDIOS

Paul Fricke assures fans that he and Scott Beaderstadt are "still revved up" about the Trollords and with each issue they're getting better and better.

A life-altering trilogy begins in **#13** as Harry, Jerry, and Larry, who have been getting cocky over their many victories over Death, lose to him for the first time

A Trollords drawing we dreaded to see.

The story, called "Lesson I," starts defining the boys' purpose here, why they escaped from Death in issue #1, etc. Lending an even more serious tone, Fricke said, is the fact that "someone close to home doesn't quite make it."

The Trollords Strike Back in issue #14, but their plan of attack doesn't work out. They take on Death, unfortunately, where he is strongest: armdst war! Their purpose, although defined even clearer, seems more out of their reach, leading the troll trio into despair.

Frustrated they retreat to their cave in issue #15. Kelly brings them Chinese food and gives them a pep talk, telling them that "you can't win 'em all, but that's no reason to give up." The fortune cookies, it turns out, have MSG, that is, Messages of Spiritual Guidance: whoever is the Trollords "boss" sends them words of encouragement.

This is also a pivotal point with Kelly. She's reciprocated for all the help they've given. Now, she and the boys will be on a more even relationship.

After the trilogy, there will be a "Who's Gonna Do It?" story, where the daring dwarfs have to prevent a murder. This will probably appear in #16.

Someone will undeservedly be placed in jail in issue #17 and it'll be up to our heroes to spring him.

Go ahead and back-up: in *Trollords* #13 is a story re-uniting the team from *Speed Racer*: Len Strazewski, now editor of *TL*, and artist Gary Thomas Washington doing a tale about horseracing (from Machs to Mares). An Xmas Lu'l Trollord story appears in the back of #14: a mother is about to give birth on the eve of the 25th. This tale is of faith, hope and cheer-ity is brought to you by the team that presented the Trollbabies story: ex-*Trollord* editor Brian Augustyn and artist Chuck Fiala, who Paul Fricke said is really getting a handle on the trolls. The Annual Congress of Anthropomorphic Representatives of Philosophy meets in #15, by Mark Shainblum of *Northguard* and Bernie Mireault of *Grendel*. The story is entitled "Death And Taxes Take A Holiday." A Haunted Baseball story appears in the latter portion of #16 written by Brian Augustyn and Len Strazewski and pencilled, inked and lettered by Paul Fricke.

Next Summer, we may be looking at a color *Summer Special*, according to whether another publisher can do it. If not, the story by Brian Augustyn and art by Lenin DelSol, who did one of the stories in the *Trollords Special* "Big Fun Book," called "Hell to Pay," will appear ... somewhere, Fricke assures.

As to the "sort of" frequency, there will a few skip months, January, April, October, and, if you want to not count the Summer Special, July.

Fricke said that with the first "phase" of the Trollords essentially done, they're revved up for the next phase. He concluded by saying that he and Beaderstadt "know where we're going. We have plenty of stories to tell." —KD—

THE TROUBLE WITH GIRLS

Written by WILL JACOBS and GERARD JONES; illustrated by TIM HAMILTON

32 black-and-white pages; $1.95; monthly from ETERNITY COMICS

"*Girls* is the story of a Walter Mitty in reverse," said co-creator Will Jacobs. "Lester Girls is a man who craves tedium and anonymity but is constantly being thrust into international adventures, gunbattles, and torrid sexual trysts. He doesn't understand why he's stuck being big, handsome, a master of all forms of combat, and irresistible to all women. But he's fed up with it."

In the next few issues, Lester's quest for deliverance finds him teamed up with gentleman adventurer Apache Dick, tough reporter Maxi Scoops, and bratty sidekicks Willy and Jerry Foster. The gang is hurled from the sinister streets of San Francisco to a lost Mayan city in the Yucatan and finally to a bizarre kingdom carved out of the darkest jungle. "At the end,' according to Gerard Jones, "Lester finds himself at the brink of a whole new phase of action, sex, and spiritual discovery."

The dynamic art takes on a new dimension with these issues as penciller

The Trouble With Girls—don't shoot the quipmaster.

Tim Hamilton begins inking himself. The scripts remain as clever as ever, since they're still in the hands of *National Lampoon* alumni Will Jacobs and Gerard Jones. Jacobs and Jones promise "a wealth of verbal and visual gags that will keep you constantly on your toes. But most of all, you'll be getting plenty of good, sometimes clean, fun."

TRYPTO, THE ACID DOG

Written by BILL MUMY and MIGUEL FERRER; illustrated by STEVE LEIALOHA

one-shot, 24 black-and-white pages; $2.00; from RENEGADE PRESS

This is a self-contained story about a bull terrier who finds himself with superpowers. "The best way that I could describe *Trypto* is that it's basically a really early Golden Age *Spectre* story, starring a bull terrier instead of the Spectre," said Bill Mumy. Publisher Deni Loubert sees it as a much more tongue-in-cheek story which pokes gentle fun at the Golden Age of comics. The premise is that a family is assassinated at the beginning of the story and the bull terrier, in his dying attempt to escape, tries to cross a river that's polluted with radioactive waste. He drowns instead, but an electrical storm has been brewing and a lightning bolt suddenly strikes the river, and the pathetic form of the lifeless dog, transforming him into *Trypto, the Acid Dog*! See justice meted out at the paws of our hero! See the villains meet their end at the jaws of our hero! It's not just another day in the life of a dog—he's got a bone to chew with the bad guys. It's his mission from God.

TWIST

Written and illustrated by J.D. KING and VARIOUS; edited by J.D. KING

32 black-and-white pages; $2.00; semi-annually from KITCHEN SINK PRESS

The first issue of *Twist*, a humor anthology, appeared in September. The second issue will appear in April. Contributions are expected from John Holmstrom, Peter Bagge, Drew Friedman, and others. Among the more unusual contributions will be the first page in a very long while by publisher Denis Kitchen, a former underground writer/artist.

Each issue also will include a retrospective on a talented cartoonist of years past who, in creator J.D. King's opinion, is not as well-known as he should be. The first issue featured Basil Wolverton, the second will focus on Boris Artzybashef, a cartoonist who escaped from Europe during World War II and did many anti-Hitler and anti-Mussolini illustrations. —BE—

TWISTED TALES

Written by BRUCE JONES and VARIOUS; illustrated by VARIOUS; edited by BRUCE JONES and LETITIA GLOZER

48 full-color pages; $2.95; squarebound; semi-annually from ECLIPSE COMICS

O.K. You surely know the basic idea of this title. That is, a series of short stories will be presented by sundry wonderful writers and artists and packaged by Mr. Jones.

Now, pay attention to the fact that *Twisted Tales* comes out bi-annually. As pointed out to me by Eclipse, this allows writers and artists to take their sweet time to produce their best possible work. For anthology fans there can be no greater thrill!

As of this writing, there is little or nothing to tell you about #2, except that it will contain a horror story set in the Old West entitled "Fly Paper." —PC—

2000 A.D. PRESENTS

Written and illustrated by VARIOUS; edited by BOB KEENAN

32 full-color pages; $1.25; monthly from QUALITY COMICS

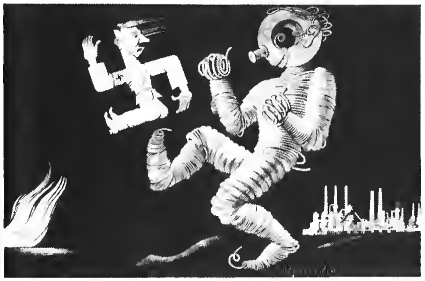
Issue #20 In *The VC's*, a counter-attack against the Geek meets with disaster! Thousands are left trapped unless the VC's can save the day. Story and art by Gerry Finley-Day and Cam Kennedy. Meanwhile, Dan Dare has his hands full with mutiny, cannibals and exploding planets! Story and art by Jack Adrian, Henry Miller, Goring and Dave Gibbons.

Cover by Ron Randell.

In issue #21, the VC's go ahead with a suicide rescue mission no one's happy with to save trapped forces on a Geek outpost. In *The Doomsday Machine*, Dan Dare and his ship have been taken prisoner aboard a huge alien vessel. They're attacked, captured, prodded, poked, and put in exhibit capsules.

In issue #22, Dan Dare and his crew are still trapped inside The Doomsday Machine, and learn both the secret of the alien craft, and the reason for their capture. Meanwhile, the VC's have figured out a way to disguise themselves in order to get inside a Geek stronghold, but are they prepared to stand by as a fellow human is tortured? Let's see them Torquemada that one! —MSM—

Classic anti-Hitler cartoons in upcoming Twist #2.



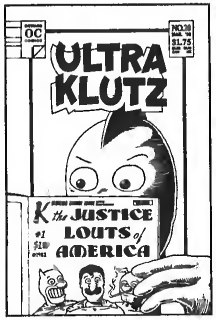
ULTRA KLUTZ

Written and illustrated by JEFF NICHOLSON

24 black-and-white pages; $1.75; 11 times yearly from ONWARD COMICS

February, typically a low sales month for comics, is a skip month for *Ultra Klutz*, so five issues will be coming out in the first half of 1988. Conveniently, they form a five-part story, "The Return of the Justice Louts."

Ultra Klutz travels to the United States



Ultra Klutz.

to hang out with the louts. He finds them radically changed from the super-hero group he once knew. Nicholson will present parodies of the old League, their present incarnation ("You know, the crummy one," he says), and the new international group.

The back-ups, all to be titled "Lost in the Shuffle," will focus on characters left back in Japan and elsewhere. Slated are updates on Chip Fwib and Joe Sneet, Sam Sogg's former Klutzian roommates, and Ichiro, the nerd who shares Kenji Saboya's apartment. —EV—

UNCLE $CROOGE

Written and illustrated by CARL BARKS and VARIOUS; edited by BYRON ERICKSON

32 four-color pages; 95 cents; newsstand distribution; eight times a year from GLADSTONE COMICS

With the transfer of the longer stories to *Uncle $crooge Adventures*, this book will feature shorter gag stories, many from Denmark and Holland, along with Carl Barks reprints and some new work by Americans. The only issue with firm contents available at presstime was **#226**, which will include a two-page story by Don Rosa and a one-pager by William Van Horn. Some covers will be supplied by Gutenberghus in Denmark—such as **#227**, by Branca. —DRD—

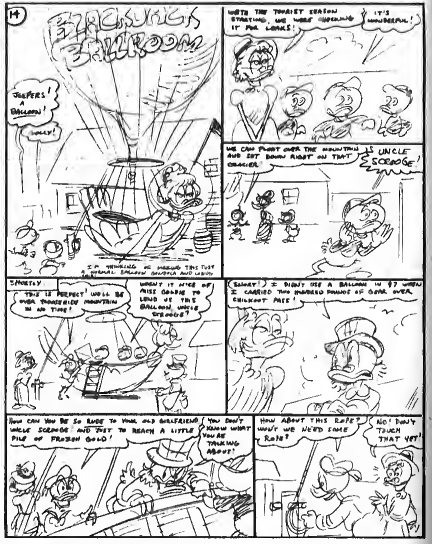
UNCLE $CROOGE ADVENTURES

Written and illustrated by CARL BARKS, DON ROSA, and VARIOUS; edited by BYRON ERICKSON

32 four-color pages; 95 cents; newsstand distribution; eight times a year from GLADSTONE COMICS

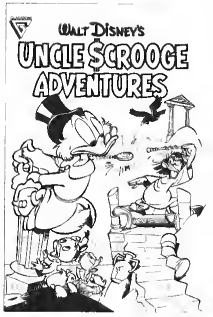
This is the book where you'll find the adventure stories that inspired Disney's current *Duck Tales* TV show. In fact, the original plan was for *this* book to be called *Duck Tales*. It may yet be changed to that, or it may be kept as a separate title and a new book called *Duck Tales* launched that would adapt the TV episodes directly. Plans are a little up in the air, obviously. As things now stand, Carl Barks's long $crooge adventure stories from the '50s and '60s are often reprinted here, along with new work in the same vein by Don Rosa and the Europeans. Issue **#5** will feature a cover and book-length story by Rosa that follows up on Barks's classic "Back to the Klondike" (recently reprinted by Gladstone as a graphic novel). $crooge's valuable sled was frozen in a glacier many years ago, but the berg has now melted to the point that recovering the sled is now feasible. All this and Glittering Goldie, too!

The following issue reprints Barks's "Oddball Odyssey," with a new cover by Daan Jippes. —DRD—



Don Rosa's "script" for a page of his "Beck to the Klondike" sequel coming in Uncle $crooge Adventures #5.

Cover by Daan Jippes.



UNDERDOG

Written by JOHN A. WILCOX, MARK MARCUS, and OTHERS; illustrated by VARIOUS; edited by JIM MAIN

32 full-color pages; $1.50; newsstand distribution; bi-monthly from SPOTLIGHT COMICS

Now there's need to fear. Overcat is here!

Overcat, Underdog's memorable foe from the original television series, returns to plague the Canine Crusader in *Underdog #4*. Editor Jim Main describes their conflict as a "real knock 'em out story." Written by the team of John A. Wilcox and Mark Marcus and illustrated by Gary Fields, "When Titans Clash" is a sequel to the TV episode where Underdog defeated Overcat. The new adventure informs us that in the interim period since their first struggle, Overcat has been exiled in shame from his feline planet, and is now out for blood (or maybe fur)!

The back-up in *Underdog* will run a series of solo stories featuring the character's supporting cast. Shoe Shine Boy (Underdog's meek, mild-mannered alter ego), the evil Riff Raff, and the mad scientist Simon Bar Sinister are a few of the players who will receive a spotlight from Spotlight. Jim Main mentions that the Simon Bar Sinister story will "get into his mind and find out why he's the way he is."

Spotlight Comics will *not* be revealing the origin of Underdog (or of Mighty Mouse either, for that matter) in any of their comics titles, preferring to leave that up to the imagination of the readers. —ME—

UNDERDOG IN 3-D

Written by MARK SCOTT MARKUS and JOHN ANTHONY WILCOX; illustrated by JORGE PACHECO; edited by JOHN STEPHENSON

One-shot; 28 3-D pages; $2.50; from BLACKTHORNE COMICS

As a new comic book from Blackthorne, this 3-D adventure will be aimed at the more sophisticated audience. "We're looking for a fresh approach," claim the writers. "We want the books to not only have the slapstick appeal for younger audiences, but also the more sophisticated, subliminal humor that was prevalent in the old Warner Bros. classics." The Blackthorne series promises all new stories, not adaptations, and will include the old villains and characters as well as the new ones.

Issue **#1** contains two stories. The lead story, called "Three Ring Threat," takes shoeshine boy to the circus. There's trouble under the big top, as the strong man and the knife thrower plan to sabotage the circus so that the owner's insurance rates will skyrocket, and they can buy his out for a song. Does Underdog come through and save the day? You'll have to wait for February to find out.

Underdog enjoying his own book.

The second story is called "Wanted: Dead or Alive." Underdog finds himself in a strange town where good is evil and evil is good. And guess who the Mayor is? I ain't telling. There's no need to fear, Underdog is back! —JC—

UNDERGROUND CLASSICS

Written by VARIOUS; illustrated by VARIOUS; edited by FRED TODD

32 black-and-white pages; $2.00; from RIP OFF PRESS

Issue **#5** of this series, which reprints the best of the Undergrounds (was that obvious from the title? Yeah, I guess it was, huh?) has Gilbert Shelton's porker of power, that swine of steel—fanfare—"Wonder Wart Hog"! One of the ultimate super-hero parodies in the days when Mutant Ninja Turtles weren't even a shell of an idea—a sincere original, people, unlike the numerous rip-offs of today.

Then, issue **#6** features the work of Jack (Jaxon) Jackson, who did *Comanche Moon*, *Los Tejanos*, some work for *Slow Death*, and *Bulto the Slug*, installments of the latter which have been appearing in *Death Rattle* from Kitchen Sink. —KD—

USAGI YOJIMBO

Written and illustrated by STAN SAKAI; edited by KIM THOMPSON

32 black-and-white pages; $1.50; eight times a year from FANTAGRAPHICS BOOKS

Stan Sakai's funny-animal tales of the 17th century feudal Japan continue to provide one of Fantagraphics's most popular titles. During 1987, a $9.95 144-page book collected all of the *Usagi Yojimbo* stories written before the rabbit ronin gaines his own magazine. The *Usagi Yojimbo* comic book began with an eight-chapter serial which recounted Miyamoto Usagi's early history—how he became a samurai, and then a wandering ronin after the treacherous murder of his lord Mifune. Now Usagi's story is ready to go forward once again.

Sakai's tales give an accurate fictional protrait of historical Japan. But *Usagi Yojimbo* is a funny-animal series. During 1988, Sakai plans to drift further away from actual Japanese history and to feature adventures which emphasize Japanese mythology and folklore. The

Usagi Yojimbo and Spot?

second *Usagi Yojimbo* story in each issue will be a more straightforward action short story.

The lead story in issue #6 has Usagi trying to rescue a samurai from a Kappa, a Japanese frog/turtle-like water vampire. Further stories will pit Usagi against mountain goblins (Tengu, like the one which appeared in the first *Usagi Yojimbo* title in 1984), magical foxes (Kitsune), and ghosts (Yurei).

In the second story in issue #6, Usagi is trapped by bandits in a hot spring. In "The Tower" in #7, Usagi rescues one of those lizard/dinosaur critters that have been appearing in the backgrounds of all the stories, and adopts it as a pet, Spot. Spot will stick around for about three issues. In #8, "Usagi and Spot are hired as reluctant assassins by a mother to kill her son," Sakai reports.

The eight-page back-up stories by guest artists in each issue will also continue. #7 will present "Patrick Rabbit," a new character by Phil Yeh, and Tom Luth will do a "Rockhoppers" story for #8. Further stories are planned by Todd Kurosawa (an ideal name for someone appearing in *Usagi Yojimbo!*), Peter Laird, and Sergio Aragonés—and sometime this year, Scott Shaw! and Mark Evanier's "Digger Duckbill" *will* appear. —FPi—

V

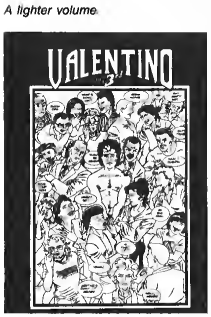
VALENTINO, THE 3rd

Written and illustrated by VALENTINO; edited by VALENTINO and KIM FRYER

32 black-and-white pages, $2.00; from RENEGADE

This is the third in a series of autobio-

A lighter volume.



graphical works. It should be out sometime in April of '88.

Valentino wanted to stress that this segment will be decisively *lighter* than the previous two volumes.

Within a mere 32 pages will be, in the words of Valentino himself:

"Another Pathetic Love Story"—adolescent run-ins with true love and the sexual frustration that result;

"Absent Friends"—reflections on friends who are long gone for one reason or another;

"Flyin' Fryin'"—a psychedelic plane ride from my misspent youth;

"The Day I Met Harvey Pekar";

"Snakes"—a look inside the animation business and the reptiles who inhabit it;

"Brain Teasin' Tales"—a mathematic quiz in comic book form." He did say there would be final exam.

And there are two text pieces, which Kim Fryer, of *The Comics Journal* fame, is helping to edit:

"Ongoing Anxieties of Obliterating Obnoxious Addictions—an exposé of the Schick quick quit smoking program and my ongoing struggle against nicotine;

"Coincidences and Ironies—how my wife and I got together." His wife, Diane, is the book's letterer.

In conclusion, Valentino reiterated the book's lighter perspective than the two preceding ones, but for those who like it, he promises to "get heavy again next issue" (#4), which, for future reference, will be called "Drawn and Quartered" and as it looks now will be one continuous story throughout. —KD—

VALKYRIE

Written by CHUCK DIXON; pencilled by PAUL GULACY; inked by WILLIE BLYBERG; edited by CAT YRONWODE

3-issue limited series; 32 four-color pages; $1.75; monthly from ECLIPSE COMICS

One of the big summer successes for Eclipse in 1987 was the *Valkyrie* mini-series. Recognizing a winning format, Eclipse this spring will present the second *Valkyrie* mini-series with the creative team from the first, writer Chuck Dixon, penciller Paul Gulacy, and inker Willie Blyberg, intact.

The story involves the battle between Valkyrie and Cowgirl. Manic's girlfriend who despises Valkyrie, cat yronwode calls this a "because readers demanded it" storyline, and traces back to the first clash between this pair when Valkyrie easily dispatched Cowgirl with the old vase to the head trick. Also, a much requested villain of Airboy will return, The Zzed.

The story involves white slavery, and a twisted version of Shangri-La. The story will be set in several locales with Valkyrie traveling around the globe. Writer Chuck Dixon promises lots of action and hair pulling, and Paul Gulacy wants kick fighting.

The story will appear in June, and Eclipse is now saying that if this sells as well as last year, then look for *Valkyrie* to become a monthly series. —ES—

VIC AND BLOOD: THE CHRONICLES OF A BOY AND HIS DOG

Written by HARLAN ELLISON; adapted by RICHARD CORBEN and HARLAN ELLISON; illustrated by RICHARD CORBEN; edited by JAN STRNAD

2-issue limited series; 32 black-and-white pages; $2.00; quarterly from MAD DOG GRAPHICS

Part the second of *Vic and Blood* adapts the latter half of "A Boy and His Dog" and "Run Spot Run." It is set in a world of savage dichotomies, where the privileged reactionaries live in sterile, science-wrought, underground caissons. The radiation-blasted surface is left to those who can survive, and there are few survivors who can match Vic, the young solo, and his intelligent dog Blood.

Why, then, does Vic want to invade the subterranean Topeka? Why, the usual reasons, one supposes: revenge, curiosity, envy, lust and love. Most of all, love. —EV—

VIDEO JACK

Written by CARY BATES; pencilled by KEITH GIFFEN and VARIOUS; inked by DAVE HUNT; edited by MARGARET CLARK

6-issue limited series; 32 four-color pages; $1.25; bi-monthly from MARVEL EPIC COMICS

Cary Bates and Keith Giffen are just getting rolling on *Video Jack*. So far, we've seen a quiet little town slip in and out of a couple of "video realities" as a result of sorcerous meddling, but that's nothing compared to what's coming.

In issue #3, delayed and shipping in January, the story "flips through" two more video scenarios. It opens at "Uncle Archie's Place" (that's as in Archie Goodwin, Epic editor-in-chief), where Jack and Damon are puppets. Then the scene changes to every viewer's favorite small North Carolina town, where a certain sheriff and his idiot deputy live and work. There's also a brief return to the original reality, where we see the reactions of the characters to what happens in the video world vs. what happens in reality.

In the fourth episode, the serial killer is brought to justice aboard an "alien" ship, and Jack and Damon become involved in a war for control of the remote and the realities it can warp the town into. We leave the small North Carolina town and are transported to a favorite 1950s sitcom, where Damon is the older teenager, who always gets the young kid (Jack) in trouble.

Starting with issue #4, if plans work out, says editor Margaret Clark, a different artist will render each of the video realities. Issue #5 will see an increasing number of realities. And #6 will be the all out battle between Jack and Damon for the remote control, featuring a whole series of channel changes, producing a multitude of video realities, each lasting only a page or two.

Video Jack drawing by Keith Giffen.

Artists were being lined up at press time, but Clark wasn't prepared to announce names yet.

The series has an option for another six issues if sales support it, says Clark, so there is a possibility the story will not be resolved in #6, but instead be continued through to #12. —BE—

VIETNAM JOURNAL

Created, written and drawn by DON LOMAX; edited by HILARY HUGHES

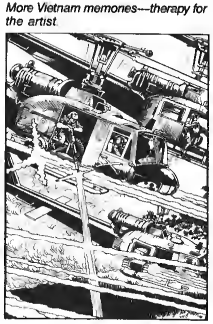
28 black-and-white pages; $1.75; eight times a year from APPLE COMICS

Don Lomax visited Sunny Southern Vietnam in the latter part of 1966, and on into 1967. This series covers the adventures and insights gained by a journalist beginning on February 14, 1967, when, according to Lomax, the nature of the war from our point of view changed from a defensive conflict to an offensive one. Our protagonist will go from one unit to another, and will stay in Vietnam until the Fall of Saigon, if the series lasts that long. Lomax has the book plotted up to the eighth issue, though, and he hasn't gotten past April '67. At this rate our journalist could be down there forever.

Lomax can't say who's influenced his style, but he does know the people whose artwork he likes—Wally Wood and Jack Davis. He says he "used to soak up the Warren black-and-whites." Lomax adds that his series has been getting a positive reaction from both mainstream comics people and from Vietnam vets. He believes his book has a story-telling advantage over Marvel's *'Nam* because his isn't locked into a one-issue = one-month time frame. "I think I'd be missing too many stories if I did that."

When asked if he has a political perspective that he's applying to the book, Lomax replies in the negative: "Twenty years ago I would have had a

More Vietnam memories—therapy for the artist.



political opinion, but now I try to tell the stories in the best way I can. I'm a comic book artist first. This book is kinda therapy for me. I can't afford two hundred dollars an hour for a shrink. I'd rather get paid for analyzing myself, if possible."

In the process of analyzing himself, Lomax will try to show as realistically as possible as many sides of the war and the people involved in it as possible. He has no interest in taking a "Rambo" approach. —ABC—

VIGNETTE COMICS

Written and illustrated by PHIL ELLIOTT; edited by PAUL GRISI and ED PINSENT

One-shot; 32 black-and-white pages; $2.95; from HARRIER COMICS

Described by Phil Elliott as "a way of creeping up on my own emotions and

Autobiography, but not in the Pekar sense.

state of being," he claims that the stories in this magazine aren't strictly autobiographical in the Harvey Pekar sense, but are far more personal than his material currently appearing in *Gag!* and elsewhere.

A sense of melodrama is very much apparent in many of the tales, influenced by old black-and-white films, and also included are some of the strips Elliott produces for a local newspaper. Decidedly homely, "The Suttons" concerns a pair of recently-weds and their baby. —FPi—

VISIONARIES

Written by GERRY CONWAY; pencilled by MARK BAGLEY; inked by ROMEO TANGHAL; edited by BOB BUDIANSKY

32 four-color pages; $1.00; newsstand distribution; bi-monthly from MARVEL COMICS GROUP

Both the Spectural Knights and the Darkling Lords seek the scattered arti-

frets of great mystical power, representing Earth, Air, Fire and Water. If the Darkling Warriors get to them first, it could mean the end of their world, Prysmos. Based on the innovative toy line using hologram accessories and the popular syndicated cartoon series,

WACKY SQUIRREL

Written by MIKE RICHARDSON and JIM BRADRICK; illustrated by JIM BRADRICK, edited by RANDY STRADLEY

32 black-and-white pages, $1.75 bi-monthly from DARK HORSE COMICS

Issue #2 of this funny animal comic in the grand tradition of funny animal comics (i.e. Tex Avery, Walt Disney, Carl Barks, and Bob Clampett) will be "Wacky Squirrel's Christmas Adventure." When Santa Claus is kidnapped by nefarious villains, it's up to Wacky to go to the North Pole to rescue him! If he can't rescue him, Christmas won't be the same. Check your list twice, to make sure this Christmas treat is on it.

In February's issue #3, Wacky and the Professor must rocket into space to stop

High adventure and outer space drama!

nasty outer-space creatures from syphoning off our ozone layer for their own evil purposes. High adventure and outer space drama abound in "Wacky and the Ozone Pirates."

Issue #4 is "Wacky's Adventures on Mars!" Wacky travels to the angry red planet, to find out why it's so angry. "There's spaceships, rayguns, little green men, little green squirrels, and of course, Wack Rogers!"

Beyond that, *Wacky Squirrel* just promises more "fun, fun, fun!" —AM—

Daan Jippes's "script" for WDC&S #529.

WALT DISNEY'S COMICS AND STORIES

Written and illustrated by CARL BARKS, DON ROSA, and VARIOUS; edited by BYRON ERICKSON

32 four-color pages, 95 cents, newsstand distribution; 10 times a year from GLADSTONE COMICS

WDC&S is Gladstone's flagship title, offering as wide a variety of Disney comics as you will find anywhere. Two issues had been firmed up as of press time. Issue #529 will run a Donald Duck story written and laid out by Daan Jippes (finished art by Dutch artist Michael Naar), the first part of a reprinted Mickey Mouse serial by Paul Murry ("The Legend of Loon Lake"), and a Gyro Gearloose story by Carl Barks. And due to inexplicable public demand, that sterling example of rhyming '40s wackiness, Bucky Bug, will start this issue, as well. Issue #530 will present a 10-page Donald Duck story by Freddy Milton, another Gyro Gearloose story by Barks, the second part of Murry's Mickey Mouse serial, and even more Bucky Bug. The cover for that issue is a 1952 Carl Barks; originally published with its background removed, it will see print here in its full version for the first time. —DRD—

THE WANDERERS

Written by DOUG MOENCH; pencilled by DAVE HOOVER; inked by ROBERT CAMPANELLA; edited by KAREN BERGER

32 four-color pages, $1.25, newsstand distribution; monthly from DC COMICS

Delayed from its original release date this October, *The Wanderers* will premiere in April. Artist Steve Dillon was taken off the project, and replaced by Jim Fern, who became too ill to continue working. Now this series rests under the pencil of Dave Hoover. The Wanderers are a group of characters who appeared in some of the early *Legion of Super-Heroes* stories (written by Jim Shooter, no less), and who are being killed for their new series. Confused? Read on.

As the first issue opens, a scientist named Clonus stumbles onto the Wanderers' ship floating derelict in space. Entering, he finds the heroes dead, and as his name suggests, he proceeds to clone the group. Accelerating their growth and increasing their powers, he creates a new Wanderers team, consisting of:

Dartalon (Dartal), a "sort of" human porcupine who carries chemically-treated quills in his quiver, but who can throw quills directly from his body as well.

Psyche, a female empath who completely manipulates, and sometimes feeds on, emotions.

Quantum Queen, whose powers are based on quantam physics (similar to Captain Atom), which allow her to do such things as fire power bursts and turn her body into light.

Reanimage (Immorto), a man with parasitical body elements which not only don't allow him to die, but allow him the

SHIPPING IN DECEMBER

WE RENEGADE PRESS.

ability to bring the recently dead back to life.

Aviax (Orintho), who has the power to turn himself into any kind of bird he can imagine, whether real or imagined.

Dark Elvar (Elvo), who has heightened agility and a power sword.

"Celebrand does not survive the cloning process," says writer Doug Moench, "so he stays dead." There really wasn't a lot to his character anyhow. Since the other members of the team have been genetically sculptured as they grew in the cloning process, some of them have chosen to change their names.

The Wanderers: Send in the clones.

Since they have no past, they truly do become ... the Wanderers.

In the first three issues, the Wanderers search for the facts behind their deaths. They have no idea who killed their prime bodies. All they know is that their bodies were found floating in their derelict spaceship. Their memories only last until shortly before their deaths. With few clues to go on, how will they find their murderers?

The Legion of Super-Heroes guest-stars in issue #3, and future guest-shots are not out of line. "Since this book occurs in the same time-frame as the Legion, their presence will always be felt," says Moench, "but I don't want the Legion to be an ever-present force in the series."

—AM—

WARLOCK 5

Written and edited by GORDON DERRY. Illustrated by DENIS BEAUVAIS

32 four-color pages, $1.70; monthly from AIRCEL PUBLISHING

Set in the 20th century, ***Warlock 5*** is one of the most peculiar comics being published today. It mixes elements of horror, fantasy and science-fiction in a manner that defies categorization.

The five main characters are Guardians of Gates, which connect the present with the past, an alternate past, an alternate present and two alternate futures. These Guardians are Argon, Doomidor, Savashtar, Tanith and Zania.

Argon is a cyber-droid from a 31st century where humanity has annihilated itself. He has vowed to prevent humans from ever gaining power over the Grid (the Gates which the Guardians protect, form a five-pointed star-shaped Grid. He who controls all five Gates controls all the realities accessed by the Grid.)

Savashtar is a mystical half-dragon, half-man from an alternative future, torn by his love of peace and his ancestry of raging violence.

Zania is a punk-rock anarchist, the only Guardian from our present time. She dabbles in black magic to raise an army of undead followers.

Tanith is a beautiful white witch who swore never to spill blood. She has other means of overpowering her enemies.

Doomidor is the ultimate warrior, arrogant and ferocious. To survive in the modern world he must leave his medieval ideas behind.

The major problem facing our Guardians is that balance must be maintained. If the Gates are unbalanced, the power of the Grid shifts from order to chaos. If the balance goes, the balance between order and chaos does also. Such an imbalance could cause the utter destruction of one or more of the alternate realities each gate accesses.

As in the game of Risk, the Guardians are always attempting to reach their own goals without sacrificing the Grid's balance. This leads to alliances of convenience, constantly changing to suit each Guardian's ambitions.

Over the next few issues there will be lots of action and intrigue as Argon develops a bizarre strategy to build an army of followers, Savashtar struggles to make the others understand the true nature of the Grid, Zania arises from her netherworld with renewed strength and, surprisingly—new allies, Savashtar, fighting against madness and violence, becomes a cult hero as word of his strange powers spreads across the country.

With the continued plot complexities and fine artwork that make ***Warlock 5*** Aircel's most ambitious title, readers will find themselves in a world that thrills, horrifies, and entertains. And according to Aircel spokesman Mike Charbonneau, future plans for the book will not result in any loss of quality.

—SW—

THE WARLORD

Written by MICHAEL FLEISHER. Illustrated by JAN DUURSEMA, edited by BOB GREENBERGER

32 four-color pages, 75 cents; newsstand distribution; bi-monthly from DC Comics

Okay, listen up. To accommodate DC's ever burgeoning line of comics, certain cutbacks are being made. Consequently, ***Warlord*** is a casualty as its frequency drops to bi-monthly. However, editor Bob has me convinced that a lot of creative energy is buzzing on the title, details of which I shall share with you forthwith.

Issues **#127** and **128** feature what editor Bob dubs, "the last dragon story." It's about a nasty old dragon that has severely messed up a particular village and incurred the umbrage of one of the resident warriors. Warlord enters the story when he bumps into the warrior as the latter pursues his quarry. But, things are not what they seem! The second half of the proceedings reveals the dragon to be an intelligent chap and not a stereotypical brute. In fact, #128 is played out from the dragon's point-of-view (which, at a guess, I would say is pretty lofty ...).

That two-parter is followed by a three-parter whose center of attention is none other than Danny Maddox, the narrator from the ***Secret Origin*** of the Warlord (#16).

Mr. Maddox has come from the Old World and made himself very much at home among an ignorant people on a secluded island somewhere within Skataris. He has brought with him a variety of technological knowledge and the ***Warlord*** creators will show whether or not Maddox has used his knowledge for good or ill (and, no, I'm not taking bets).

When I say "ignorant," I mean that the people are ignorant of life outside their island. Thus, they know spit about Travis Morgan, the Warlord. This is good news for him! His reputation and self-image have taken a bit of a battering in the several months preceding this three-parter and so his destined encounter with Maddox and the islanders allows him the chance to prove his mettle once more.

To backtrack a bit, Warlord meets an enigmatic sorceress-type female and, together, they are drawn to the mysterious island where dramatic conflict abounds!

If a dragon, Danny Maddox and an enigmatic sorceress-type aren't enough for you, then you might get a thrill out of issues **#132** and **133** which feature the final secret origin of ... Shakira!

Issue **#131** has an added bonus, whose background I believe I am obliged to explain. 16-page inserts will be rotated through various DC titles for seven consecutive months in 1988. They will be produced by new talent, and one such insert will appear in ***Warlord*** as mentioned above. Look, then, for a special focus on Jennifer Morgan.

Now, to turn to more general matters, editor Greenberger says the bi-monthly frequency of ***Warlord*** will probably necessitate self-contained issues with thematic threads carried over to following issues.

In a different vein, Greenberger says reader reaction to the Warlord's encounters with other characters from the DC Universe was rather negative (*Power Girl?!*) Never one to ignore his loyal readers, Mr. Greenberger has decided to return ***Warlord*** to its isolated ways.

And ... that's all folks!

—PC—

WARRIORS

Written and illustrated by VARIOUS

32 four-color pages, $1.95; monthly from ADVENTURE PUBLICATIONS

Warriors is an anthology title featuring stories about the individual characters from ***Adventurers***. In ***Warriors***, characters are followed outside of the restrictive plot lines that a teambook such as ***Adventurers*** often employs. To ensure continuity, the stories take place either before ***Adventurers Book I*** or between ***Adventurers Book I*** and ***Book II***. One objective of the stories in ***Warriors*** is to strengthen and build the personalities of the individual characters within ***Adventurers***.

In many ways, ***Warriors*** is a showcase fantasy featuring many different artists and writers, as well as a full color cover painting in each issue. ***Warriors*** will include work by Mark Ellis, Brian Guice, Doug Murray, Dan Greenberg, Adam Hughes, Steve Stiles, Steve Hickman, Sam Inabinet, Iain McCaig, annd Peter Hsu.

Warriors #2 features stories on Shadolok (the quick-thinking fighter and master archer), exploring his youthful relationship with his father and brother; Coron (the most popular Adventurer) following his theological journey with a monk, and Dhakab (the desert warrior) charting his tutelage under desert mystics.

Warriors #3 will include three new action stories featuring Bladenelm, Nightwind and Sultar.

Warriors cover by Burles.

WASTELAND

Written by JOHN OSTRANDER and DEL CLOSE. Illustrated by DAVID LLOYD, WILLIAM MESSNER-LOEBS, DONALD SIMPSON and GEORGE FREEMAN, edited by MIKE GOLD

32 four-color pages, $1.75; monthly from DC COMICS INC. (Mature Readers)

Probably the strangest comic to hit the market for a while, ***Wasteland*** will continue to push at the boundaries of the mind. The improvisational book does not usually have specific stories intended for each issue, but some have been nailed down for upcoming issues.

The lead story in issue #5 is called "The Big Cross-Over Story," a story in which writers Del Close and John Ostrander are thrown into the comic book universe. "We go out looking for a plot," says Ostander, "and get lost in a bunch of different storylines." In the DC Universe? "At least the DC Universe! Maybe some others, if we can pull it off." The story may actually cross-over into some other books, including Ostrander's own ***Grimjack***, although the appearances will be brief. "We want all those people who don't read ***Wasteland*** to see these two characters walk through a scene, and leave, so that the reader (of the other books) is asking what the hell is going on!" According to editor Mike Gold, all of the character cross-overs will be consistent with the theme of ***Wasteland***, although he did not guarantee everyone would like the cross-overs. David Lloyd draws this story.

Also in issue #5 is a war story drawn by Donald Simpson, and called "This Time We Win," which could be about Vietnam but isn't, and could be about the next war, but might not be. Confused? Try writing the preview for ***Wasteland***, and you'll get even more confused! Another semi-autobiographical story by Del Close and William Messner-Loebs will tell about Del's experiences with cowboy actor Lash LaRue. George Freeman does cover honors this issue.

Under a Donald Simpson cover, issue **#6** contains the beginning of a two-part story drawn by George Freeman, called "On the Road." This is another Del Close story, dealing with Del's experiences in the deep South, performing Shakespeare in bars. "This is very much a horror story," says editor Mike Gold. "It's sort of *Deliverance* done with a Shakespeare group. We're pretty enthused about this story because it represents a very sick and unique part of Del's life, as most of the stories do."

Another war commentary story in issue #6, is entitled "Paper Hero," by William Messner-Loebs, and the issue is rounded off with a David Lloyd story called "Method Actor," "because we can't get enough acting stories in ***Wasteland***," says Gold.

Issue #7 will conclude the George Freeman drawn "On the Road," as well as two other stories, under a William Messner-Loebs cover. "After that, we'll probably play around with the page length of the stories," says Gold. "We'll get past our rigid nine-page page length. Hopefully by that time, we'll all be arrested," Gold laughs, "which is only fair, considering some of the material we've been publishing in ***Wasteland***."

"The basic concept of the series as far as I'm concerned," says Ostrander, "is to make your mind itch. Or as Mike Gold would say, to give you icky thoughts. We do feel that that is our job. We aren't going to really play up any supernatural elements, although sometimes they'll be there. The New Universe used to say it was the world outside your door, but ***Wasteland*** is that world outside your door. Or at least not far away from it. We're the only series I've ever known which uses pseudo-autobiographical stories as horror stories."

"If your good *Amazing Heroes Preview Special* readers have read ***Wasteland*** by now," says Gold, "they sort of know what ***Wasteland*** is. We sort of told people it was a horror book, kind of, but different. By this time people should know that it is kind of a horror book, but also a black humor book as well. It's pretty risky stuff, and some of it is in questionable taste. Most of it is in questionable taste!"

Wasteland has been seen as an alternative to the traditional adult horror comic, which usually contain more T&A than horror. "I have no objection to T&A," says Gold. "Some of my best

friends have either T and/or A, so I have nothing against it. This really isn't seen much in comics, though: combining really perverse black humor with horror. We're having a lot of fun doing this! It takes a lot more time and energy than any other book I've ever worked on. You never really know, until you're finished with each story, whether you've pulled off all of the elements needed. Is the horror there, are the psychological elements there? We want to keep the horror in the reader's head. It's every easy to lay the horror out on the printed page, but the end result should be horror in the reader's mind.

This is one of those books, that if you get a letter or a phone call from someone saying that they really disliked a story, or it really bothered them, that is every bit and sometimes more of a compliment than if someone said the story was great. It's a horror book. Of course it's going to bother you!"

Sales on the series remain very high, although no one is really sure of the book's future popularity. "It may stay high and get some kind of a cult status," says Gold, "or all the people who have been reading it may decide it's just too weird and quit buying it. I think ***Wasteland*** is as different from anything in its genre as ***Mad*** was to its genre when it started. ***Mad*** was very touch-and-go for the first year. ***Wasteland*** could fail or it could climb. We really don't know what to expect."

The Spanish Inquisition, Mike. Nobody ever expects the Spanish Inquisition.

—AM—

Berni Wrightson does the JLI justice on the cover to ***The Weird #4***.

WEB OF SPIDER-MAN

Written by PETER DAVID; art by VARIOUS; edited by JIM SALICRUP

32 four-color pages, $1.00, newsstand distribution, monthly from MARVEL COMICS GROUP

He's ba-a-ack!

The Hobgoblin returns. He plans to impress the Kingpin's Number One man, the Arranger, by killing Spider-Man. Unknown to Spidey, when he slips out of a party to fight the Hobgoblin, he has been drugged!

The Looter also re-enters the scene and robs Nathan Lubensky. When Peter learns of this, nothing will stop him from hunting down the Looter.

Betty Leeds, still suffering from the death of her husband (Ned Leeds—the original Hobgoblin), decides to join a religious cult, with startling results. After dealing with that crisis, Peter Parker embarks on the book tour for his new collection of Spider-Man photographs [*see the* ***Amazing Spider-Man*** *preview*]

THE WEIRD

Written by JIM STARLIN; pencilled by BERNI WRIGHTSON; inked by DAN GREEN; edited by KAREN BERGER

4-issue four-color mini-series, $1.25, monthly from DC COMICS INC.

The Weird is being touted as a ***Justice League International*** mini-series in the fan press, but writer Jim Starlin considers the super-team guest stars in the book, as is Superman. "The Weird is the real star of the book," says Starlin. "He is a dead man whose body is invaded by an energy being from another dimension. The first issue is basically The Weird assimilating himself, to figure out exactly what he is now. He can control his density to where he is transparent, or hard as a rock. He can also control any energies in contact with himself, by setting up a harmonic balance between himself and the energies." He immediately comes into contact with the Justice League International. The son of the man who is now The Weird is introduced in the first issue as well, but does not play a major role until issue #2.

In issue #2, The Weird comes into conflict with Superman, and the son plays a major role in the story. The Weird comes into conflict with another creature whom he calls The Jason in issue #3.

"No, he's not a character in a hockey mask," explains Starlin. "His name is Jason Morgan, but since The Weird is not really operating on all cylinders, he calls him The Jason." It seems that the energy beings in the other dimension had known they were human beings, but had never contacted them until now, thus they do not know how to address humans properly. The Jason is a half-crystalline, half-human being who serves some evil aliens called the Macrolatts. The Weird is a being known as a Zarolatt, a member of a race once subservient to the Macrolatts.

The final issue of the series will feature the grand confrontation between the Justice League International, Superman, Nuklon (from ***Infinity, Inc.***), The Weird, The Jason, the Zarolatts, and the Macrolatts. "It's quite a story how Nuklon ended up in this," laughs Starlin. "Originally, it was supposed to be Captain Marvel, but DC didn't want us to use him because of the high costs every time we use him. Then we were going to use Wonder Woman, but we couldn't use her either. We looked around and settled on Geo-Force from the ***Outsiders***, but then he got killed off in ***Millennium***! So we ended up with Nuklon, who I almost knew nothing about at the time!"

The Justice League International members were changed during the working time for the mini-series, resulting in a somewhat different line-up for this incarnation of the League. The starring members will be: Doctor Fate, Blue Beetle, Captain Atom, Black Canary, the Martian Manhunter, Batman and (the nasty) Guy Gardner.

The Weird begins in early January.

—AM—

WEST COAST AVENGERS

Written by STEVE ENGLEHART; pencilled by AL MILGROM; inked by MIKE MACHLAN; edited by MARK GRUENWALD

32 four-color pages, $1.00, newsstand distribution, monthly from Marvel Comics

Distant lands and bizarre menaces are in store for the Whackos, beginning with a journey to Hungary to free Hank Pym's ex-wife—with the help of the Wasp! As Mockingbird is menaced by the man she killed—The Phantom Rider—Vision and the Scarlet Witch enter the scene, and may become regular members of the West Coast team. And as if things aren't busy enough, the old Godzilla villain, Yetrigar, shows up and attacks!

An entrance so dramatic it makes the panel tilt in ***West Coast Avengers***.

WHAT TH--?!

Written and illustrated by VARIOUS; edited by CARL POTTS, then JIM SALICRUP

4 issue limited series, 32 four-color pages, $1.25, newsstand distribution, monthly from MARVEL COMICS GROUP

What th' heck is ***What Th--?!*** It's a super-hero parody comic, that's what!

Marvel has never been afraid to lampoon its stable of super-heroes. From 1967 to 1969, they published 13 issues of ***Not Brand Echh***, where they not only laughed at their own characters (Spidey-Man, the Mighty Sore, et al.), but other famous heroes as well (Gnatman). That comic also introduced Forbush-Man, who has since become the mascot of Marvel Comics (and is due for return appearance with Spider-Ham in ***Marvel #211***, in a story scripted by the same guy who wrote this preview entry. How's that for an unabashed plug?)

The madcap merrymen at Marvel returned to producing satire in the mid-'70s with ***Crazy Magazine***, a ***Mad***-inspired publication that had its own distinct flair, plus featured super-hero parodies. And, of course, there was the off-beat ***What If #34***, an all-humor issue, where we learned the answers to such soul-searching questions as "What if Sue Storm had become the Thing?" and "What if Iron Man had an eating problem instead of a drinking problem?"

Well, they're at it again, with a four-issue limited series that features no-holds-barred take-offs of their popular super-heroes. Assistant editor Glenn Herdling notes that the material in ***What Th--?!*** will be similar to that of ***What If? #34***, rather than a revival of ***Not Brand Echh*** format.

Issues #1 and 2 of ***What Th--?!*** will be edited by Carl Potts, while Jim Salicrup oversees the final two issues. Issue #1 goes on sale in April.

—ME—

WHAT IF? SPECIAL

Written by PETER GILLIS; pencilled by STEVE DITKO; edited by RALPH MACCHIO

one-shot, 48 four-color pages, $1.25, newsstand distribution from MARVEL COMICS GROUP

Peter Gillis's long-promised "What if Iron Man had turned evil" story finally shows up in ***What If? Special #1***, released in February. See the clunky old Iron Man costume! See the Fantastic Four as drawn by Steve Ditko again! Al Milgrom and Jack Abel provide a Ditko-ey cover.

WHISPER

Written by STEVEN GRANT; illustrated by NEIL HANSON; edited by RICK OLIVER

32 four-color pages, $1.75, monthly from FIRST COMICS

Whisper goes monthly with #13, the first

Even funnier than your usual issue of ***X-Men***. *The satirical* ***What Th--?!*** *Pencils by Jon Bogdanove*

A new job and more fun

issue of 1988, and new artist Neil Hanson assumes art responsibilities with that issue as well. Issues **#13-15** will be Steven Grant's "Billionaire Boy's Club-Satanic motorbikers storyline. The Rich Kids is the name of the organization. There are going to be women in it, to show what a non-sexist swine I am, all children of rich L.A. types, who have reached 18 and 19 and have banded together to form business ventures. They're kind of an unscrupulous lot."

As of **#13** Diane starts a new job as a receptionist at Parker Langdon's architecture firm, and "she's starting to develop a wider sphere of reference and new friends and a new life. She'll be loosely involved with moviemakers and people in the entertainment world. He new boss has sort of grandiose plans of what to do with his life, and she gets invited to coast along with him on that."

The storylines from **#16** on aren't firm, although there will probably be a story about channeling, but Grant promises a lot of plot threads running through the first half of the year which will lead to issue **#24**.

Some old faces will be returning, although probably farther into the future. "Toroyama will come back, Bane is coming back eventually. Carnicero isn't dead by the way." Following the events of **#12**, Cynthia becomes a recurring problem (although a non-ambient one). Grant also mentions that there's going to be an issue where Eckhardt comes back. But isn't he dead?

"Well, he is. I figured out a way to bring him back. I figured if they could bring Ray Luca back in *Crime Story* I could bring Eckhardt back."

Just like a comic book, right?

"Everybody who really dies in this book really dies. And Eckhardt's really dead, but Eckhardt will be reappearing."

Oh great, so we're going to see a mouldering corpse?

"No, no, no," Grant assures us, chuckling.

While Diane's personal life will not be quite as traumatic as it was, "she's going to continue getting into situations that she's really not equipped to handle. Since she came to L.A. I've had her in situations [where] she was probably as capable as the people she was fighting, simply because they didn't know where she was coming from. Up to **#6** she basically fought people who were two steps ahead of her, and since then she's been fighting people whom she's two steps ahead of." But that will probably change again. "It'll just continue to be this kind of gritty, *film noir*ish material."

Grant admits that *Whisper* is, in many ways, not a particularly easy book—or character—to get a handle on. "I do want to require a certain amount of work on the part of the reader, which probably limits my market somewhat, but if First can live with it, I can live with it. Just like any one of us, she's off there existing in a moral limbo. You've got to remember this is a book in which God doesn't exist. It's a pretty mechanistic universe.

"It's not really a social interest book. It doesn't lend itself to socially redeeming stories. I think we've all had enough of social redemption. I like *Whisper* because it's the place where I can extend my world view. It's my world view. I'm not making it up. It's pretty much the way I look at the world, and it's the place where I can say things I think a lot of people would like to hear, because they've all thought those things themselves but you're not supposed to say it."

Whisper will be teaming up with Jon Sable as part of First's crossover series, in a detective tale written by Grant and drawn by Cynthia Martin. —HMacD—

WHO'S WHO IN THE LEGION

Written by BARBARA RANDALL and PAUL LEVITZ, illustrated by VARIOUS, edited by KAREN BERGER and MARK WALD

7-issue mini-series, 32 four-color pages, $1.25; newsstand distribution; monthly from DC COMICS INC.

Premiering in December, this seven-issue mini-series will help celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Legion of Super-Heroes, the young team of DC's future Earth. Although this series will contain some of the same information as the previous two *Who's Who* series, it will feature all new art, untold facts, and go into much greater detail with everything presented. "We wanted it to be a whole new creative book," says editor Karen Berger. "We didn't want just a reprint of a bunch of *Who's Who* pages."

Twelve pages of each of the first two issues will detail the history of the Legion, in much the same manner of *History of the DC Universe*. These pages will be illustrated by Steve Lightle, cover artist for the regular *Legion* series. All of the heroes and villains will have expanded entries, as will some of the supporting characters. The new pages have one illustration of the heroes, similar to *Marvel Universe* and most role-playing game stat sheets. Art for the characters will be by Keith Giffen, Greg Larocque, Dave Cockrum, Curt Swan, and Dan Jurgens, among a few others.

The books will not only contain details about the people of the 30th century, but also about the 30th century as a whole. There will be files on the different alien worlds and races, the cities of Earth, the governments, the Interlac alphabet, the Legion Academy, and the Science Police. "Everything and anything you would ever want to find out about the Legion, you will find here," says Berger, "even if you were afraid to ask." —AM—

WHO'S WHO UPDATE 1988

Written by PETER SANDERSON, MARK WAID, and VARIOUS, illustrated by EVERY ARTIST IN THE BUSINESS, EVEN SOME OF THE ONES YOU WOULDN'T EXPECT, edited by MARK WAID

4-issue mini-series, 32 four-color pages, $1.25; newsstand distribution; monthly from DC COMICS INC.

Well, they're planning another *Who's Who* series up at DC, but concrete plans are not yet set (No, no *Concrete*, that's Dark Horse!). New editor Mark Waid has said that the next series will present all the characters from A to Z again, with some exceptions.

"We're going to pare the characters down," says Waid. "The characters who are not in the DC Universe, such as *Camelot 3000*, the *Watchmen*, and *Atari Force*, will not be included. We are going to make this exactly what the title is: *Who's Who in the DC Universe*. This will reflect the post-*Crisis* world of DC, so all the Golden Age characters that no longer exist will be gone, and the origins for everyone who has a new one will be changed as well."

In addition, the book will feature all new art, and a new look for the entries. Other than the *Who's Who in the Legion*, no other Who's Who special editions are plannned for the forseeable future. —AM—

WILD KNIGHTS

Written by EVAN DORKIN, illustrated by ALEX LEONINE and MYKE

32 black-and-white pages, $1.95; monthly from ETERNITY COMICS

The Wild Knights, first seen in *Ex-Mutants #2*, will debut in their own series in March. The new series will have a different direction than the Ex-Mutants. "The focus of *Wild Knights* will be on the cast of roving characters and their plight," explains scriptor Evan Dorkin, the creator of Eternity's *Pirate Corps$*. The Earth after the war is no joyride, but is filled with giant rats, bodiless vampiric heads, marauding mutant youth gangs, and other things too horrible to mention here. The past is remembered and longed for. There is no plumbing, gas is a rare commodity, and romance is dead."

Wild Knights—a post-holocaust tale inked by a men with no last neme

Into this dismal future ride the Wild Knights. The original Wild Knights were a cycle gang who became survivalists shortly before the Final War. Led by Zack, they created an oasis of civilization, New Hope, on the outskirts of New York. New Hope was destroyed in *Ex-Mutants #7*, and the Knights have been wandering ever since. *Wild Knights #1* takes place several months after the disaster, and includes all new characters, ("some barely human," Dorkin said) searching for a safe place to live and bartering their skills to get by.

The major menace is a charismatic half-vegetable, half-human mutant named Ha'Mercy who leads a religious order known as the Red Cross. Their spiritual mission: to mercifully relieve people from the horrible postwar lives they lead . . . by killing them. The organization is large, armed, and capable of inadvertently destroying any hope of a new world.

Wild Knights is illustrated by Alex Leonine, whose work should be familiar to regular Eternity fans, and Myke, a mysterious man with no known last name.

WIMMEN'S COMIX

Written, drawn and edited by VARIOUS WOMEN WHO ALL HAVE A SENSE OF HUMOR BUT REFUSE TO BE TAKEN LIGHTLY

32 black-and-white pages; $2.00; twice a year from RENEGADE PRESS

The 13th issue of *Wimmen's Comix* will be a special "Superstition" issue, due out this Spring. The editors for this go round are Krystine Krytture and Dori Seda, the same folks who brought us the Fashion Issue, and the contributors will include many of the same culprits, and, as usual, some new ones, too. —HMacD—

THE WIZARD OF FOURTH STREET

Written by SIMON HAWKE, illustrated by PHIL NORMAND, edited by RANDY STRADLEY

4-issue mini-series, 32 four-color pages, $1.75; bi-monthly from DARK HORSE COMICS

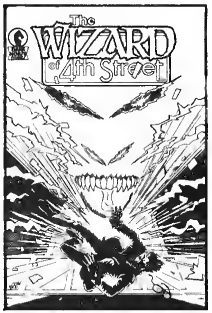
This adaptation of Simon Hawke's popular urban fantasy novel of the same name will conclude the modern-day story of a flock of familiar and unfamiliar figures.

Issue #2, due out in January, features the origin of the mysterious Runestones, and finds Kira and Wyrdrune still stuck with their ill-gotten gain while the cops pursue them. Then, in issue #3, Riguzzo and Clearly question Rozetti, while Kira and Wyrdrune escape to Boston. Fats hires an assassin (who just happens to be Modred) whose apartment has just been trashed, Merlin gains the Runestones from Wyrdrune at the college, and Rozetti is killed by Mustafa.

In issue #4, Riguzzo and Clear find Rozetti dead, and Wyrdrune and Kira share a hot and steamy scene together in their hotel room just before the Runestones appear at their side again. As Wyrdrune attempts to take them back to Merlin, Kira is snatched and confronts Al-Hassan, while Modred intercepts Wyrdrune and kills Mustafa. Then the cops finally catch up to everybody!

Issue #5 sees Riguzzo and Cleary's first meeting with Faye Mogan, and learn about Morpheus. Meanwhile (!?) Rashid dominates Kira in his palace just before she is rescued by Merlin and Wyrdrune. When a monster "soul creature" appears in Merlin's basement, the cops and Merlin both learn who Faye Morgan and Morpheus really are. Kira and Wyrdrune escape to New York.

The final issue of the series, issue #6, will show Rashid's dreams, Kira's possession by Rashid, and Wyrdrune's rescue by Modred from Kira. Merlin's house blows up, Faye Morgan and Riguzzo go to a subterranean cavern, and the Dark Ones manifest themselves. Then, there's a "big finish."



Another titled gone over to Derk Horse!

Well, it certainly doesn't look as if this series lacks any action, does it? —AM—

*ABOVE: A pencilled panel from **Wolfpack**. BELOW: A George Perez **Wonder Woman** cover with many buildings.*

WOLFPACK

Written by LARRY HAMA and JOHN FIGUEROA; pencilled by RON WILSON; inked by KYLE BAKER; edited by ANN NOCENTI

12-issue limited-series. 32 four-color pages. 75 cents; newsstand distribution, monthly from Marvel Comics

Picking up where the graphic novel left off, ***Wolfpack*** is a group of highly-trained teens. Each has become an expert at one aspect of ninja training. In the streets of the South Bronx, they fight street crime stemming from a very ancient source, wearing the modern masks of drugs, prostitution, and more.

Wolfpack will lose one of their original members only to gain a new one, and will defeat a major foe.

WONDER WOMAN

Written and pencilled by GEORGE PEREZ; some scripting by LEN WEIN; inked by BRUCE PATTERSON and AL VEY; edited by KAREN BERGER

32 four-color pages. 75 cents; newsstand distribution, monthly from DC COMICS INC.

Remaining one of DC's best-selling books, ***Wonder Woman*** will be written entirely by George Perez as of issue **#17**! Issues **#15** and **16** are a two-parter scripted by Len Wein as his "swan song", and part of the issue will contain a dream sequence mirroring Superman's back in issue **#3** of his own book, except this time with Wonder Woman dreaming of Superman, rather than vice versa. The origin and background for the new Silver Swan will be given, exploring the relationship between two female penpals. Silver swan is Valerie Beaudry, a victim of spouse abuse, and is a person of very low self-esteem, trading on scenes Perez has known from real life.

Issue **#16** concludes the Silver Swan story in a story titled "Bird Of Paradise, Bird of Prey." Wonder Woman and the Silver Swan battle above the streets of Boston, but the angrier Silver Swan gets, the less control she has over her sonic cry. This issue also begins a four part ***Superman/Wonder Woman*** cross-over, when Wonder Woman contacts Superman to meet. The story begins in ***Wonder Woman*** **#16** (welcoming new inker, Al Vey), continues in ***Superman*** **#17** (by John Byrne and Karl Kesel), goes to ***Adventures of Superman*** **#440** (by John Byrne and Jerry Ordway), and concludes as the lead feature in the 80-page giant-sized ***Action*** **#600**! The story for ***Action*** **#600** is co-written by Perez and Byrne, pencilled by Byrne, and inked by Perez.

"This four part story establishes that there is a relationship between Diana and Clark," says writer/artist George Perez. "In Diana's character, I see the hints of a possible relationship. She's seeing all the different relationships in her life: the beginning of one between Hippolyta and Heracles, the Etta Candy/Steve Trevor relationship, and even that between Vanessa and Barry. Since these feelings for Superman are new to her, she wants to find out what they are. Julia is away in Greece with the family, so Diana has to find this out on her own." Is the relationship going to continue? "John and I came up with a way to resolve the relationship ... for now. Whether or not it goes anywhere in the future will be told in the future."

Issues **#17** and **18** will be another two-parter, introducing the new Circe. The mythological witch has survived through the centuries, thanks to a spell cast upon her by the goddess of magic, Hecate. Circe has been living on a Greek island, and when Diana comes to Greece to visit Julia's family, he comes in contact with her. Issue **#17** is entitled "Night Of The Beasts," in which Perez promises centaurs and other mythological creatures. "Issue **#18** will represent Diana's first actual defeat at the hands of an adversary. She has always managed to grasp victory, if even at the last moment, but here she is defeated. The battle with the Cheetah ended in a draw, a conclusion that was not very clear in that issue."

The only facts Perez would reveal about issue **#19** is the title: "Who Killed Myndi Mayer?" When Diana returns to America, she gets caught up in the mystery surrounding the death of her ex-publicist. "This is something I really hope will jolt the reader. My wife, Carol, has helped tremendously with the plot." This issue will also contain a "Bonus Book" 16-page story, by an unnamed (at press time) creative team.

Wonder Woman gets her first annual in 1988, and it's a 40-page doozy! Perez will be scripting the multi-story issue entitled "Amazons," and pencilling and inking the framing sequence at the beginnings and end of the book. Art Adams is illustrating "The Diving Bird," which tells the story of the young Diana being taught to dive from the cliffs for the Ritual of Nereids. Another story tells what happened to Antiope, Hippolyta's sister, and her tribe of Amazons left in Europe during ancient Grecian times. Julia Kapatelli's background will be explored in another story, revealing her first trip to Paradise Island, long before the Wonder Woman series ever started! The building of the Doorway Of Doom which guarded the gates to the bowels of the Island, is the final story included. Other artists for the book include Brian Bolland and Jose Luis Garcia-Lopez, both of whom will be inking their own work, and tentatively Ross Andru, to be inked by Perez. Two pin-up pages will also appear: one by Bill Sienkiewicz, and the other tentatively by John Totleben. Perez will provide the painted cover for the issue as well.

*A George Perez **Wonder Woman** cover with no buildings at all!*

Plans for issue **#20** are undecided at press time, but Perez has many plot threads open for the future. Hermes may come down to Earth, and his future relationship with Diana will be explored. The Amazons' relationship to the world will change considerably as well. "The whole Amazon concept of equality cannot exist, if they're separated from one half of the human race, at least as far as sex is concerned. They do acknowledge that man can set foot on Paradise Island, since Heracles has already done so. It's ironic that Heracles is the first man to do so, since he was the one who got them in trouble and sent to the island in the first place," laughs Perez.

Heracles and Hippolyta's relationship will continue strongly through the series, although Perez would not reveal to what extent. The Amazons decide to start an exchange program, since Diana is acting as an ambassador to Man's World. "Now they have to find out which men they want to come to Paradise Island. Any outsider would be there to teach, but primarily to learn. I'm establishing the fact that because of the shield that the Gods put up around the island," says Perez, "no electronic equipment works on the island. Video recorders, cameras, the tape recorders, and telephones will not work. This allows me to keep Paradise Island a little more aloof from the Man's World.

"Diana will also be going more international. She'll go to different spots of the world where traces of Amazon civilizations have been known to exist. I want to bring back the Cheetah and tell her origin, and I may have Diana's lasso taken away from her for a while. The implications of what would happen if it were missing from her persona are not all revealed yet, and I want to delve into that. It's much more than just a lariat that makes people tell the truth. It's from the girdle of Gaea, so it probably has some other unknown qualities."

Steve Trevor will probably become a test pilot soon, for a company competing with Ferris Aircraft, and the relationship with Etta Candy will deepen. Etta will continue to lose weight, and the other supporting characters will continue to grow and change within the series. "Even though my exclusive contract with DC is up in 1990! That's her 50th anniversary, and I want to do a fantastic 50th issue!" —AM—

WORDSMITH

Written by DAVE DARRIGO; illustrated by R.G. TAYLOR

12-issue limited series; 24 black-and-white pages; $2.00; quarterly from RENEGADE PRESS

As *Wordsmith* draws near its 12th and final issue, the series still will not reach the point in the storyline that creator Darrigo had hoped for.

According to Darrigo, publisher Deni Loubert is still considering options as to the format for the completion of the series. Among the ideas being explored are the release of a series of reprints. This series would be four compendiums of three issues each. The format would be similar to the packaging of First's *Lone Wolf and Cub*. The fourth issue could, conceivably contain a new (prose) story, illustrated by Taylor.

Yet to be explored are Clay's experiences in Hollywood, his serious novel, and the poignancy of his discovery, late in life, that he will be remembered for his pulp work rather than his more serious efforts.

Darrigo sees the possibility of a prose novel (again with illustrations by Taylor), to tell the remainder of Clay's story.

For now, *Wordsmith* will end with the story incomplete, in issue #12. —SW—

WORLD OF METROPOLIS

Written by JOHN BYRNE; artists UNDETERMINED; edited by MIKE CARLIN

4-issue mini-series; 32 four-color pages; 75 cents; newsstand distribution; monthly from DC COMICS INC.

World of Metropolis, the final of the historical trilogy of mini-series defining Superman's roots, will examine the lives of the civilian associates of Clark Kent and the Man of Steel.

Each issue of *World of Metropolis* will spotlight an individual member of the supporting cast, and balance a contemporary setting with informative flashbacks. The focus on Perry White will include the *Daily Planet* editor's early days in the newspaper business, his first dealings with Lex Luthor, and his relationship with his troublesome son Jerry.

The subsequent issues of the mini-series will feature Luthor, Lois Lane, and Jimmy Olsen.

At press time, editor Mike Carlin had yet to cement any art team commitments, noting that securing artists who are comfortable drawing real clothing ("this isn't a super-hero story!") is no easy task in an industry filled with artists who are used to illustrating burly guys in tights. He did mention that comic strip veteran Leonard Starr was a possible inker.

World of Metropolis #1 is scheduled for an April release. —ME—

WORLD OF SMALLVILLE

Written by JOHN BYRNE; penciled by KURT SCHAFFENBERGER; inked by ALFREDO ALCALA; edited by MIKE CARLIN

4-issue mini-series; 32 four-color pages; 75 cents; newsstand distribution; monthly from DC Comics

The story behind the reconstructed legend of Superman that began in *Man of Steel* continues to unfold in *World of Smallville*, the follow-up to John Byrne and Mike Mignola's *World of Krypton* mini-series. Editor Mike Carlin boasts that he is quite proud of the unusual artistic pairing of Kurt Schaffenberger and Alfredo Alcala, and cautions readers that the art looks "odd ... but nice." He adds that Alcala's inks give Schaffenberger's layouts a rustic look, which is an appropriate atmosphere for a "down-home" series like this one.

World of Smallville is *not* a Superman story, but it provides information into the background of the Kent clan. We'll learn more about Clark's childhood, which received very limited coverage in *Man of Steel*. The mini-series also looks at the relationship of Jonathan and Martha Kent, and Carlin is quick to mention that their first meeting is "not what anyone expects. I know that sounds like ordinary comics hype, but I can honestly say you will *never* guess how they meet."

The facts behind Smallville and Lana Lang's possession by the evil Manhunters will pick up from the *Millennium* series into *World of Smallville* #3, answering any questions fans may have about that startling development in a tale that's not unlike the classic "small town possessed by aliens" science-fiction movies of the 1950s.

Issues #2-4 of the mini-series will appear monthly from January to March. —ME—

WRATH OF THE SPECTRE

Written by MICHAEL FLEISHER; illustrated by JIM APARO; edited by BOB GREENBERGER

4-issue mini-series; 48 four-color pages; $2.50; monthly from DC COMICS INC.

Ah, controversy! This series is in fact inspired by the now infamous Fleisher lawsuit. It is a partial reprint (I'll explain that momentarily) of the *Spectre* stories originally printed in *Adventure Comics* in the 1970s. While the stories were Comics Code approved, they were considered very tough and controversial for their time. Now, I said *partial* reprint, didn't I? Well, the 4th issue is *new* material from the '70s. I kid you not. Fleisher had scripted three more *Spectre* stories for *Adventure* that were never drawn. While putting this package together, the unused scripts were redis-

The cover to the final issue of **Wordsmith**, *#12.*

One of our favorite scenes from the Fleisher/Aparo **Spectre**, *reprinted in* **Wrath of the Spectre**.

covered, and Aparo is at this very moment illustrating them. The series will feature new wraparound covers by Aparo, and the inside covers will contain text pieces by Peter Sanderson. Sanderson will be interviewing Fleisher, Aparo and original editors Joe Orlando and Paul Levitz to discuss the impact these stories had back in the 1970s. —JW—

X-FACTOR

Written by LOUISE SIMONSON; penciled by WALT SIMONSON; inked by BOB WIACEK; edited by BOB HARRAS

32 four-color pages; $1.00; newsstand distribution; monthly from MARVEL COMICS GROUP

X-Factor is now publicly well-known, and with that familiarity comes a whole new series of problems, not the least of which is Iceman's taste for the celebrity life. Angel and Marvel Girl will embark on a quest for Sara Grey and Candy Sothern, and a new villain, Infectia, enters the scene. The entire series will move rapidly toward the summer epic meeting, face-to-face, with The X-Men, and the consequences of that explosive encounter.

Still standing, but not for long.

THE X-MEN

Written by CHRIS CLAREMONT; penciled by MARC SILVESTRI; inked by DAN GREEN; edited by ANN NOCENTI

32 four-color pages; $1.00; newsstand distribution; monthly from MARVEL COMICS GROUP

"The Fall of the Mutants" has ended, and everyone saw the X-Men die in order to save the world.

X-Men #228 is a special tale starring Wolverine and Dazzler, presenting the last will and testament of Alison Blaire. Tom DeFalco plotted the issue, it was written by Chris Claremont, pencilled by Rick Leonardi, and inked by Terry Austin.

After that, readers will learn that the X-Men have abandoned the advantages of modern America for the most primitive and desolate wasteland on Earth—the outback of Australia. The Land Down Under will prove to be a crucible, forcing the mutants to be stronger, better-prepared for the extreme hardships they will encounter just in the course of daily life.

Before the "Fall," as mutants, the X-Men were more than human. Now, as legends, they are more than heroes.

Their first Australian adventure brings them up against a ruthless group of mutant cyborgs who have been terrorizing all of Southeast Asia, known as "The Reavers." By the time this first encounter is over, the X-Men will have faced one of their most difficult tests, and will gain a new base of operations.

The 1988 *X-Men* annual will feature the return to the Savage Land.

X-RAY

Written by JIM FORTH; drawn by JIM FORTH; then MARK PANICCIA; edited by MARK PANICCIA

32 black-and-white pages; $1.75; bi-monthly from PYRAMID COMICS

X-Ray is your average, everyday, ordinary genetically mutated Alpha Cop of the Chicago of 2025. The fact that he doesn't know the mercenary Ruckbud [*see separate listing*] killed his father will almost certainly have a bearing on the book's events 40 or 50 minutes into the future. Until then he's going to have his hands full dealing with dope runners, thieves, child-abusers, and gang members of the future. All the Alpha Cops have super powers in 2025, so I guess all the child abusers do too, just to make the stories more interesting. —ABC—

A kick-ass X-Men cover by Marc Silvestri.

X-TERMINATORS

Written by LOUISE SIMONSON, pencilled by JON BOGDANOVE, inked by AL WILLIAMSON, edited by BOB HARRAS

4-issue mini-series, 32 four-color pages, $1.00; newsstand distribution: monthly from MARVEL COMICS GROUP

The kids from *X-Factor* must save their youngest member from death in a tale that ties in with the long-anticipated face-to-face meeting of *X-Factor* and the *X-Men* next summer. The series stars Rusty, Skids, Boom-Boom, Arnie, Rictor, Leech and a new member. For heaven's sake, don't leave the children alone—!

(ARISTOCRATIC) X-TRATERRESTRIAL TIME-TRAVELING THIEVES

Written by HENRY VOGEL, pencilled by MARK PROPST, edited by DWIGHT JON ZIMMERMAN

32 black-and-white pages, $1.75, bi-monthly from COMICS INTERVIEW PUBLICATIONS

In issue #6—entitled "Censored"—Fred and Bianca come face to face with the dreaded Censor. Like "Reality" who became a character and was dealt with earlier in the series, the Censor will actually wander through the book. However, unlike Reality, Censor will not actually become a part of the book, but will operate in-between the panels.

Fred and Bianca have traveled to the planet Llewlaf to steal some books from the Edwin Meese Library for Banned Books (located, incidently, on Robertson Street). While on Llewlaf, the Censor steps in and begins to "remove" words from the dialogue. This results in no small amount of consternation for our heroes. For, once a word is removed, it is gone forever from the dialogue. Naturally enough, this makes it more than just a bit difficult for Fred and Bianca to talk to each other, as more and more words are censored from the script.

While this is going on, the Brain Police show up to antagonize Fred and Bianca (and no doubt the reader). Finally, the X-Thieves determine that the only way they can combat the Brain Police and the Censor, is to leave the story, and slip between the panels to fight them on their own ground. This winds up in a big, blow-out with all three groups. Writer Henry Vogel told us that he didn't want to make this story strident or preachy, but to have some fun with it.

In the seventh issue the X-Thieves must fight their own car, as the Fredmobile is invaded by an electrical virus named Sparky. This story is titled "My Car, My Enemy." Since the Fredmobile can transform itself into virtually anything, Sparky handily defeats Fred and Bianca and imprisons them inside the Fredmobile. Then it sets out in search of other prey. Along the way it runs into the Repo Man, a dull-witted IRS agent who is repossessing a planet, and has a personality akin to Rambo. Fred and Bianca attempt to free their car while it bounds around the known universe, causing all sorts of trouble. Vogel wouldn't tell us how the story turns out, but he did say that in issue #8 the Fredmobile is back and Sparky wasn't. "There are no issues in this story," he said, "Just good clean fun."

In #8 another person from Bianca's past—from when she attended thief school—pops up. Apparently this person broke into a place shortly before Fred and Bianca, and one guard winds up dead with another on the critical list. Fred ducks out with the injured guard while Bianca pokes around looking for clues on who committed the atrocity. Only she is caught and charged with the murder. Fred must now save the life of the injured guard so that the guard can testify as to who beat him up and killed his partner.

Vogel promised that this story will culminate in a wildly funny courtroom scene, "That even Bob Inbersoll (legal columnist for the *Comic Buyer's Guide*) won't be able to complain about, but he will enjoy." Vogel revealed that the courtroom scene will have no foundation in Earth Law—as it will be an alien culture—which is why Ingersoll won't be able to nitpick at it. (Wanna bet?)

Long range X-Thieves fans should keep their eyes peeled for a four-part X-Thieves mini-series that will delve into Fred and Bianca's past lives. This series is slated for sometime over the Summer, but Vogel said the details for the mini-series were still being worked out and that the schedule was not quite firmed up at this writing. —RJS—

XANADU

Written and illustrated by VIM. WYMAN, edited by M. BYRD

32 black-and-white pages on white paper, $2.00, quarterly from THOUGHTS & IMAGES

"IN XANADU DID Allynrud, the emperor of All, decree an Ever-Changing Palace stand on the shores of a Unicorn Pool.

"Allynrud, the Sun-Maned, established his Empire in Year One of the Imperium, using magic from his Unicorn Pool. He ended the rivalries between differing factions of the Mythological Nobility and founded the Order which exists to this day. Peace reigned in Xanadu and the Nobility ruled, assisted by the wild-blooded Freeborn and served by the lowly Domestique.

"But Allynrud has been dead these past three years, and his impetuous daughter Alicia rules in his place. There is no Sun-Maned Emperor to object to the shadowed figure which scrambles up his illustrious image in order to gain access to the Ever-Changing Palace beyond."

The shadowed figure who is climbing up the statue of the Emperor to break into the Palace is Tabbe le Fauve, a renegade Domestique and master thief. The reason that the Palace is Ever Changing is that it was designed magically so that the order of its halls and rooms would constantly move about, to help confuse intruders and confound court intriguers. (Not that this was enough to save the emperor...) A consequence of this magic is that a thief hoping to sneak into a neglected cellar is liable to find himself in the Empress's boudoir instead.

The empire of Xanadu has some of the aspect of the Celtic faerie court, but it is much more of a funny animal pastiche of the 17th and 18th century French and Spanish royal courts as depicted in all those 1930s and 1940s movie swashbucklers. Tabbe le Fauve, the dashing thief and master swordsman and lover is a cat Errol Flynn. Reginald Plume, the Captain of the Imperial Guard, is a griffin Basil Rathbone... well, you get the idea.

Reggie is not so much evil as he is a total snob and male Chauvinist pig. He is loyal to the Empress, but she is, after all, only a woman and therefore not to be taken seriously as a ruler. When Alicia orders that Tabbe shall be captured alive and unhurt, Reggie immediately understands that it is his duty to make sure that Tabbe must die before the Empress's impetuousity leads to a royal scandal. Other main cast members include the Unicorn Empress's long-suffering, elderly advisor Octobius (dragon), her pure-hearted lady-in-waiting Fatima (vixen); Tabbe's commonsensical, wise-cracking sidekick Jonathan (mule); and Reggie's thoroughly despicable henchman Scratch (rat).

*Tabbe LeFauve from **Xanadu**. You were expecting Olivia Newton-John?*

Xanadu is designed for those who will appreciate a tongue-in-cheek addition to the glorious old swashbucklers. The empire of Xanadu also has been designed with enough detail to its history and social order to make it of interest to game-players and other connoisseurs of fantasy kingdoms. The first issue of this new quarterly is scheduled to go on sale in February 1988. —FFn—

XENON

Written and illustrated by MASAOMI KANZAKI, translation by SATORU FUJI & FRED BURKE, lettering & touch-up art by WAYNE TRUMAN, edited by LETITIA GLOZER

32 to 40 black-and-white pages on white paper, $1.50; bi-weekly from ECLIPSE INTERNATIONAL/VIZ COMMUNICATIONS

Eclipse/Viz's fourth Japanese title, introduced in Dec. 1987, picks up speed as 1988 starts. ***Xenon*** is the most recent and shortest of the Japanese imports so far. The original comic art novel ran for 29 episodes during 1986-1987, so the American bi-weekly edition should be finished by the end of 1988.

Xenon is also the most brutal and explosive Japanese translation to date. The Bloody Sea is a ruthless global secret organization that specializes in high-tech gun-running. They not only sell weapons, they conduct their own research to advance mankind's most deadly technologies. One of their goals is the ultimate cyborg super-soldier; an invulnerable living killing-machine. A Bloody Sea scientist, looking for a guinea-pig, selects a high-school senior whom his innocent granddaughter has a crush on. The operation leaves the senior, Asuka Kano, in a state of amnesiac shock, but

*A page from **Xenon**, photographically reversed for your convenience, but not translated yet.*

The old underwater battle cover scene deal, from Xenozoic Tales

with enough independence that he will not be the Bloody Sea's pawn.

Asuka/Xenon must not only re-learn who he is, but he must discover what he has become. He has to find out who among his high-school friends he can really trust, because almost everybody seems to be against him, including a really nasty gang of schoolyard delinquents. The Bloody Sea wants to get rid of him since they can't control him. Rival cyborgs see him as a target to be knocked off for their own prestige. Others scheme to take advantage of his super-lethality. Also, Asuka isn't any Mr. Nice Guy who's just sitting back and taking all this. He's mad as hell at the Bloody Sea for what they've done to him, and he wants vengeance!

Xenon is divided into three "books," "Metamorphosis" (episodes/issues 1 through 7), "Wandering Devils" (8 through 15), and "The Red Disk" (16 through 29). The story moves swiftly, new characters and factions are frequently added, and the plot swirls confusingly as characters turn out to be not what they seem. Kanzaki employs a harsh, sketchy art style which emphasizes the turmoil and agony of the protagonists. —FPa—

XENOZOIC TALES

Written by MARK SCHULTZ, illustrated by MARK SCHULTZ and STEVE STILES, edited by DAVE SCHREINER

32 black-and-white pages, $2.00, quarterly from KITCHEN SINK PRESS

Because of creator Mark Schultz's difficulties in meeting the demands of a bi-monthly deadline, the publishing frequency of *Xenozoic Tales* has recently been decreased to quarterly, but there has been no change in format.

Each issue will still feature two self-contained stories, one written and drawn by Schultz, the other written by Schultz and drawn by Steve Stiles.

Issue #5, due in late February, continues in the vein of #4, in which the first revelations were made as to why the ages of Earth have been linked following non-atomic cataclysms in this future time. The whole story isn't going to be revealed all at once. The characters in the story don't know the full story yet, and the readers will learn as they do. However, editor Dave Schreiner did hint that the catastrophes that led to situation were ecologically linked and that bio-engineeringly played some role.

The stories will continue to center on Jack and Hannah. In coming issues, the reader will learn more about Hannah's people and eventually she and Jack will journey back to her land, which is roughly analogous to where Washington, D.C. was (Jack's home is where New York was). —BE—

Y

YAKUZA

Written by PETER PALMER, illustrated by KEVIN FARRELL and JAMES BALDWIN

32 black-and-white pages, $1.95, monthly from ETERNITY COMICS

YAKUZA RULES OF CONDUCT: Never touch the wife of a member. Never reveal Yakuza secrets. Never betray the Oyabun/Kobun bond.

Welcome to the world of the Yakuza, a Japanese criminal organization predating the Roman Empire, where honor is more important than life itself. Descended from samurai, the Yakuza of today are the most tightly knit and ruthless force in Japan. Bound by the Oyabun/Kobun bond, where the younger members are trained and led by the Oyabun or clan leaders, the Yakuza have become involved in every aspect of Japanese life.

Created by *Ninja* writers Peter Palmer and C.J. Henderson, *Yakuza* continues their interest in Japanese culture. "I've always been fascinated by it," Palmer said. "There are so many facets, so many different relationships, to explore." Regular *Ninja* artist Kevin Farrell has recently joined the book as penciller. "Having him on the book is especially pleasing," Palmer added. "He has such a flair for storytelling—his work is never less than exciting, and he always delivers more than what is asked."

Yoshio of the Hattori clan has been falsely accused by his brother Ryiochi of murdering the president of American Hydraulics. "The murder was committed to insure the Hattori clan gains access to the off-shore cities being built by American Hydraulics," Palmer said. After defeating the Rhee clan in unarmed combat, Yoshio gains the respect of his father and gains back the "face" he had lost to his brother.

Yakuza: Two against many

As the off-shore cities near completion, the rivalry within the Yakuza grows more intense. In issue #4, a boat race is marred by the assassination of the Hattori driver by the Takatoki clan and a full-scale clan war erupts.

YOUNG ALL-STARS

Written by ROY and DANN THOMAS, pencilled by VARIOUS, inked by MALCOLM JONES III, edited by ROY THOMAS and MARK WAID

32 four-color pages, $1.25, monthly from DC COMICS

Issue #11 of *Young All-Stars* will feature the second part of the origin of "Iron" Munro, the son of Hugo Danner, who is in turn the hero of Phillip Wylie's novel *Gladiator* (the precursor to Superman). This issue will be pencilled by Mike Bair, and will feature the team accompanying Munro back to Indian Creek, Colorado, where he must decide whether or not he will stay with the team.

Another two-part story begins in issue #12 and continues in #13, to be pencilled by Howard Simpson. The Ultra-Humanite is back, as is Deathbolt, and they're out to find the Ultra-Humanite a giant body in which to place his brain. After rejecting that of a giant ape who fell off of a building in New York City, they travel to Dinosaur Island. Project M, the governmental experiments which created the Creature Commandos and G.I. Robot, will also play a part in the story. The Young All-Stars must also deal with the ever-worsening threat of Fury, who (unknown to herself) sometimes blacks out and becomes the homicidal creature she is named after from the Greek myths. Since she doesn't care who she kills, will the Young All-Stars be able to stop her if she attacks them?

Young All-Stars art by Simpson and Jones III.

Issue #14 will either be a one-part story, or the start of a four-part story about Neptune Perkins. Whichever is not in #14 will be in #15. The four-part Neptune Perkins story will explain his parentage and his past, and give clues about exactly what his future will be. Tsunami will also play a major role in the story, which will be drawn by Mike Bair.

A one issue origin of Dyna-Mite is planned, to be drawn by Will Simpson, and Thomas plans to focus more on the new team member, Tigress, who seems to be the same character who is later a villainess called the Huntress. Another sub-plot of the book will concern a few of the members having to finish out the school year, and whether or not Arn Munro will even be able to graduate. Vince Argondezzi will probably guest-pencil a few issues of *Young All-Stars* in the near future. —AM—

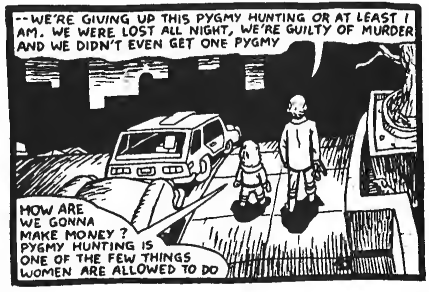
YUMMY FUR

Written and illustrated by CHESTER BROWN

24 black-and-white pages, $1.75, bi-monthly from VORTEX COMICS

Chester Brown's *Yummy Fur* continues to be the most celebrated unknown comic around, according to publisher Bill Marks. "We get more mail for *Yummy Fur* than anyother title," he claims. To date, the book has only received one negative letter.

From the ever-creepy Yummy Fur by Chester Brown.



The book, which is highly respected in the industry, will remain true to tendency to strike a lot of nerves in areas of sex, violence and religion. (All while remaining relatively violence free, and tending toward the sensual rather than the salacious).

Upcoming characters include the Reagans (yes! Those Reagans!), Ed the Happy Clown, The Man Who Couldn't Stop, and Bob (of the Electric Talking TV).

In the back-up series, 1988 will most likely see the completion of the comics adaptation of the Gospel of St. Mark. —SW—

Z

ZEBRA CLUB

Written by DEAN MOTTER, illustrated by (again, watch this space)

3-issue limited series, full-color, page count, price and frequency to be determined

This long, long, long-awaited Mercedes mini-series is still in a state of semi-limbo. Apparently, it will be solicited when "everyone who has anything to do with it, is happy."

The previously mentioned storyline finds Mercedes trying to get away from it all for a South Seas vacation only to find murder, mayhem and Mr. X have followed her (and I'm getting a lot of mileage out of that line).

Another consideration affecting the release of the mini-series is that it can only be published at times that will fit into the events of the Mister X continuity. According to Bill Marks, Vortex Publisher, "We've already passed one of these 'windows' and are coming up on the next one fairly rapidly. It may be a

few months before the one after that, but we are trying to make sure that everything is just right for this series." —SW—

ZELL, SWORDDANCER

Written, edited and roughed by STEVEN A. GALLACCI; finished art by MONIKA LIVINGSTONE

32 black-and-white pages; $2.00; bi-monthly or more often from THOUGHTS & IMAGES

The martial/performance artist whose book just wouldn't roll over and play dead is back this spring or early summer on a firm schedule. In the second issue Zell arrives in the far western lands and gains her sword. Future issues follow her adventures as she seeks her fortune in the wide world.

When asked if it would be fair to call *Zell* a science fantasy, Steven A. Gallacci said, "It's done primarily as a straight, fairly serious, fantasy. But there will be science fictional undertones in it. So... I don't know how you'd describe that." Well, "science fantasy" leaps to mind, but we'll just say it blurs the boundaries.

—EV—

ZERO HOUR

Written, illustrated and colored by GILBERT DUROCHER; translated by MARK SHAINBLUM

32 full-color pages; $2.00; monthly from MATRIX GRAPHIC SERIES

Publisher Mark Shainblum didn't want to give away too much on this one. He says that *Zero Hour* is a "lot of fun," and that it centers around "nuclear terror and airships."

He also makes a point of noting that creator Gilbert Durocher is a young Montreal artist whose European style has been influenced by a number of the European comics masters—most particularly the late Edgar P. Jacobs, whose work on *Blake et Mortimer* is virtually legendary.

"This came in to us as a complete graphic novel and we are releasing it as a three issue mini series over three months, simply because, outside of translation, it's ready to go.

"I think everyone will be amazed by Durocher's work," adds Shainblum.

—SW—

ZERO PATROL

Written and illustrated by ESTEBAN MAROTO with NEAL ADAMS

32 full-color pages; $2.00; bi-monthly from CONTINUITY GRAPHICS

Issue #3 of the ongoing reprinting of Spanish artist Esteban Maroto's sf adventure explores fear and its effects on the brain as the Zero Patrol seeks to prevent a planet wide disaster and face their own fears. Issue #4 starts out with a new sequence pencilled by Neal Adams and inked by Maroto.

ZOT!

Written and illustrated by SCOTT McCLOUD; edited by CAT YRONWODE

32 black-and-white pages; $2.00; bi-monthly from ECLIPSE COMICS

Interrupted even as he was feverishly finishing another issue of *Zot!*, creator Scott McCloud graciously took a few moments to reveal that Dekko, the mantumed machine from #3 and 4, returns in "The Eyes of Dekko" in #17-18. Asked to describe the story, McCloud is at a bit of a loss for words. "Oh dear... It's going to be a very strange story. Dekko as you remember was put away in #4 and rehabilitated and they did a wonderful job of rehabilitating him, except for the fact that he's still very crazy. But he learned the ropes, so he managed to convince everyone that he was really rehabilitated. In point of fact, he's about ten times crazier than ever. And his scheme is appropriately that much crazier." He notes that much of the story is told from Dekko's point of view. "His mind has distorted everything he sees into lines and shapes and patterns. So we really get inside Dekko's head this time." Brrr.

The next issues will be one of two things. Either, at long last, the Blotch story, or else, the first ever "Special Guest Artist" issue of *Zot!* McCloud scripts and does layouts, but the identity of the guest artist is still under wraps. However, his name will be quite familiar to regular Eclipse readers.

Now, wait, before you get mad at poor Scott crying, "Fill in!," faithful readers have to understand that this time he's really got a good reason; better than an appendectomy, better than moving. You see, wedding bells are going to be ringing in McCloud's future.

Zot! deadlines are in jeopardy "because of my upcoming marriage, and one week honeymoon and three weddings. But I can't postpone an issue for a month, that's a bit much, but there's a story I've had planned for a long time called 'Getting to 99.' It's a suspense story very much involved with numbers, time clocks, digital displays, a whole range of iconography that keeps reminding the reader of the situation every single moment." McCloud explains that because of the length of the story—a full 36 pages—he had always planned that he would only do the layouts and another artist would draw it. And that is indeed what will transpire.

"It's a special guest shot. It is a one-time thing and it really isn't a fill-in issue. It's something I had hoped to do and something I could only do with another artist. It's an experiment."

At that moment, accompanied by cries of "Zot calls! Got to work!" McCloud was summoned back to his drawing board by the faithful Watchdogs of the Schedule. Indeed, it is this reporter's opinion that *Zot!* readers can rest easy knowing that these Watchdogs are on the job, guarding against "missed deadlines" and the like.

—HMacD—

Z-z-z-Zot's all, folks!

NOW ON SALE!

Adventure in the Antarctic continues in this month's issue of **Eternity Smith**, *by writer Dennis Mallonee, artist Rick Hoberg, and inker Aaron McClellan.*

While Smith and Skylark investigate the mysteries of a strange and alien base buried beneath the frozen soil of the Antarctic, danger threatens the survival of the Habitat!

—also in this issue—

KNIGHTSHADE writes to Skylark, telling her all the details of "How I Spent My Summer Vacation."

It's a TIM BURGARD tour de force, with inks by WILLIE BLYBERG, concluding the Knightshade solo story that began last month.

IF YOU'VE HAD TROUBLE FINDING HERO COMICS TITLES AT YOUR LOCAL COMIC BOOK SHOP, PLEASE TURN TO THE SUBSCRIPTION AD ELSEWHERE IN THIS ISSUE!

Pick up your copy today!

SUBSCRIBE!

The most exciting, informative, and fun magazine about comics!

Amazing Heroes is now *better than ever!* Twice a month you get loads of special features, regular columns, news, opinion, history, lots of art, and a great new look ... **Everything you expect from the *BEST* Magazine about Comics!**

- INTERVIEWS with your favorite pros!
- NEWS on the latest happenings!
- PREVIEWS of new and revamped series!
- An invaluable COMING COMICS CHECKLIST!
- REVIEWS of the latest publications!
- PLUS Doc's Bookshelf, Video View, Don Rosa's Information Center & more!

Subscribe now and get *at no extra cost* the next *Amazing Heroes Preview Special*-180 pages of exclusive SNEAK PEEKS at comics for the coming half-year!

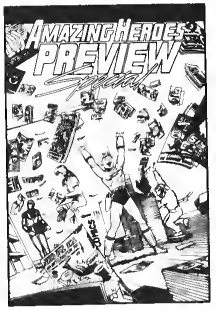
What are you waiting for!? Get the *BEST* magazine about comics—*SUBSCRIBE TODAY!*

BACK ISSUES!

They're all great! Get 'em while you can!

#1-3: SOLD OUT!
#4: FRANK MILLER's *Daredevil!* $2.50
#5: *Ka-Zar* preview; DITKO's Spidey. $2.50
#6: Moon Knight; Doom Patrol $2.50
#7: GIL KANE; JAN DUURSEMA $2.50
#8: SOLD OUT!
#9: Capt's Carrot & Action history $2.50
#10: Metal Men; Swamp Thing $2.50
#11: Horror issue; *Night Force* $2.50
#12: PAUL SMITH interview! $2.50
#13: 100-page *Star Wars* issue! $3.00
#14: *Camelot 3000* previewed $2.50
#15: KEITH GIFFEN cover/interview. $2.50
#16: *New Mutants* previewed. $2.50
#17: Wolverine and the Marvel killers. $2.50
#18: *Nexus* previewed; RUDE! $2.50
#19: E-Man interview with PASKO $2.50
#20: *Amethyst*; HEMBECK interview $2.50
#21-22: SOLD OUT!
#23: *Crystar*, Chaltis of the Unknown $2.50
#24: *DNAgents*, DD's women. $2.50
#25: MILLER's *Ronin!* $3.50
#26: MORROW, RON GOULART! $2.50
#27: APARO cover; BARR interview $2.50
#28: *Sword of the Atom* preview! $2.50
#29: CHAYKIN's *American Flagg!* $2.50
#30: *Thriller*; John Jonzz! $2.50
#31: TOM SUTTON interview; big ish $3.50
#32: *Somerset Holmes*; Doc Doom $2.50
#33: First's *Mars*; Doom history! $2.50
#34: Preview of *Redeemer!* $2.50
#35: Inferior Five; Jack Of Hearts! $2.50
#36: THOMAS on WW II heroes $2.50
#37: *Rocketeer's* DAVE STEVENS $2.50
#38: PINI cover and WeRP article. $2.50
#39: 1984 Preview issue! The beginning of a tradition—and still worth having! $4.00
#40: *Sun Runners*; Iron Man history $2.50
#41: WAYNE BORING interview $2.50
#42: DUAGMIRE interview and cover! $2.50
#43: Warlock history & cosmic cover $2.50
#44: *Alien Legion* previewed. $2.50
#45: ED HANNIGAN interviewed $2.50
#46: Legion index; *Power Pack* $2.50
#47: KIRBY's *New Gods* $2.50
#48: *Mr. X*; JAIME HERNANDEZ $2.50
#49: A preview of *Dalgoda* $2.50
#50: 148-page issue! PEREZ interview/cover; O NEIL and BARR on Batman! $4.00
#51: Continuity; GOLDEN cover! $2.50
#52: Brits: BOLLAND *Dredd* cover! $2.50
#53: WILLINGHAM's *Elementals!* $2.50
#54: SOLD OUT!
#55: BACK IN STOCK! 128-page issue with BILL SIENKIEWICZ interview/cover! $5.00
#56: Heroines! NOWLAN cover! $2.50
#57: *Starstruck* preview! $2.50
#58: *Badger* and *Nexus* preview! $2.50
#59: ZECK talks about *Secret Wars!* $2.50
#60: Four MANTLO series previewed! $2.50
#61: *Groo* preview; ARAGONES cover! $2.50
#62: 1985 Preview issue! Even hotter than before! $4.00
#63: BC BOYER's *Masked Man!* $2.50
#64: Moon Knight history preview! $2.50
#65: *Black Dragon*; BOLTON cover! $2.50
#66: *Crisis* original PEREZ cover! $2.50
#67: JIM SHOOTER on *Secret Wars III* $2.50
#68: Ambush Bug; SIMPSON, jokes! $2.50

#68: MILLER Elektra/Batman cover! $2.50
#70: *Squadron Supreme* cover by HALL and BEATTY! $2.50
#71: SOLD OUT!
#72: *Hawkeye/Vision/Scarlet Witch* $2.50
#73: *Eternals*; SAL BUSCEMA cover $2.50
#74: DAVE COCKRUM's *Futurians* $2.50
#75: CHRIS CLAREMONT interviewed! $3.50
#76: *Hulk/AF*; MIGNOLA/BYRNE cover! $2.75
#77: *Mr. Monster* jam cover! $2.75
#78: *Outsiders*! KITCHEN interview! $2.75
#79: *DC Challenge* elucidated! $2.75
#80: *Blood of the Beast* preview! $2.75
#81: Scout preview; TRUMAN cover! $2.75
#82: Marvel mutant index; *Sun Runners!* $2.75
#83: *X Factor*; GUICE & LAYTON cover! $2.75
#84: Batman history; BISSETTE cover! $2.75
#85: Interview with ALAN DAVIS! $2.75
#86: *Hawkmoon*; KAYANAN cover! $2.75
#87: Previews of *Electric Warrior* and *Lords of the Ultra Realm*; BAIKIE cover! $2.75
#88: CHAYKIN's *Shadow* previewed! $2.75
#89: *Threat* preview; STRNAD interview. $2.75
#90: BRUCE JONES interview; *Comet Man* preview; FUJITAKE cover. $2.75
#91: Big post-Crisis issue, with PEREZ cover. *Everything* you wanted to know. $4.00
#92: VALENTINO interview; *normalman*. $2.75
#93: *Demon*; WAGNER interview/cover. $2.75
#94: SIMPSON, ROBBINS, *Unicorn Isle!* $2.75
#95: *Jonny Quest*, DOUG WILDEY! $2.75
#96: SOLD OUT!
#97: SOLD OUT!
#98: JIM STARLIN interviewed! $2.75
#99: *Elektra*; MILLER/SIENKIEWICZ speak! Plus Eclipse's new universe! $2.75
#100: Special booklength tribute to JACK KIRBY, with a KIRBY/RUDE cover! $3.25
#101: Preview of Marvel's New Universe $2.75
#102: Batman ish; MAZZUCCHELLI cover/interview, plus MILLER and BARR $2.75
#103: WILLIAM MESSNER-LOEBS speaks, plus BOB BURDEN's dangerous con $2.75
#104: SF comics; DOUG RICE cover. $2.75
#105: MARK EVANIER interview, with DAN SPIEGLE Crosstire/Reinbow cover $2.75
#106: *Wonder Women* PEREZ preview $2.75
#107: *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* cover. $2.75
#108: Question! Atom! KARL KESEL! $2.75
#109: SCOTT McCLOUD interview/cvr $2.75
#110: *Fallen Angels*; GAMMILL cover $2.75
#111: TY TEMPLETON speaks (a lot)! DITKO/MILLER analyzed! $2.75
#112: *Concrete* preview! Arrow Comics! $2.75
#113: *Justice Machine*; GARDNER FOX interview $2.75
#114: BARON and JANSON on *Punisher!* *Trollords!* $2.75
#115: SWIMSUIT ISSUE! Cover by KEVIN NOWLAN, plus 50 pages of drawings! $3.50
#116: ERNIE COLON interview and cover, behind the new Justice League $2.75
#117: *Captain E-O*; DARK HORSE $2.75
#118: Japanese comics issue! Painted *Kamui the Ninja* cover by SANPEI SHIRATO $2.75
#119: MAX ALLAN COLLINS interview. *Superman's* time travel stories $2.75
#120: MIKE GRELL interview and *Green Arrow* cover; sorting out DC's continuity $2.75
#121: Kindling *Alien Fire*; Metamorpho $2.75
#122: The secrets of 4Winds, plus a hero history of the X-Men's Rogue $2.75
#123: FRANK THORNE and his many heroines, plus a history of the Joker $2.75
#124: Blackthorne's Timeli—whoops! $2.75
#125: FRANK CIROCCO interviewed, plus previews of *Marshal Law* and *Sable*. $2.75
#126: *Millennium* preview, CHARLES VESS interview, plus Neff Comics! $2.75
#127: Starblaze Graphic Novel overview/preview, with a PHIL FOGLIO cover! $2.75
#128: MIKE BARON interview, with *Sonic Disruptors* cover, plus Harmer preview. $2.75
#129: Funny-animals! GALLACCI cover/interview! FREDDY MILTON! Mighty Mouse history! preview! More! BIG issue! $3.50



Preview Special #1: SCOTT McCLOUD cover. Classics that came out—and didn't! $4.50
Preview Special #2: *Nexus* cover by STEVE RUDE! Invaluable reference! $5.00
Preview Special #3: STEPHEN DeSTEFANO *Mazing Man* cover. '86 previews! $5.00
Preview Special #4: The best cover yet, by ARAGONES/SIM/GERHARD! More comics covered than ever before! $5.00
Preview Special #5: Cover by ART ADAMS of *Gumby* and the *Flaming Carrot*! Plus the most complete info around! $5.00

☐ Send me the next 12 issues of *AMAZING HEROES*, including the next *AH PREVIEW SPECIAL*, for the low subscription price of $26.95

☐ Rush me the next 24 issues of *AH*, including the next two *PREVIEW SPECIALs*, for the extra low price of $49.95

Also, send me the following back issues of *AH*.

☐ *Amazing Heroes Preview Special #1* ($4.50)	☐ #75 ($3.50)	☐ #105 ($3.00)
☐ *Amazing Heroes Preview Special #2* ($4.50)	☐ #76 ($2.75)	☐ #106 ($3.00)
☐ *Amazing Heroes Preview Special #3* ($4.50)	☐ #77 ($2.75)	☐ #107 ($3.00)
☐ *Amazing Heroes Preview Special #4* ($5.00)	☐ #78 ($2.75)	☐ #108 ($3.00)
☐ *Amazing Heroes Preview Special #5* ($5.00)	☐ #79 ($2.75)	☐ #109 ($3.00)
☐ *Best of Amazing Heroes #1* ($4.50)	☐ #80 ($2.75)	☐ #110 ($3.00)
☐ # 4 ($2.50) ☐ #29 ($2.50) ☐ #51 ($2.50)	☐ #81 ($2.75)	☐ #111 ($3.00)
☐ # 5 ($2.50) ☐ #30 ($2.50) ☐ #52 ($2.50)	☐ #82 ($2.75)	☐ #112 ($3.00)
☐ # 6 ($2.50) ☐ #31 ($3.50) ☐ #53 ($2.50)	☐ #83 ($2.75)	☐ #113 ($3.00)
☐ # 7 ($2.50) ☐ #32 ($2.50) ☐ #55 ($4.00)	☐ #84 ($2.75)	☐ #114 ($3.00)
☐ # 9 ($2.50) ☐ #33 ($2.50) ☐ #56 ($2.50)	☐ #85 ($2.75)	☐ #115 ($3.00)
☐ #10 ($2.50) ☐ #34 ($2.50) ☐ #57 ($2.50)	☐ #86 ($2.75)	☐ #116 ($3.00)
☐ #11 ($2.50) ☐ #35 ($2.50) ☐ #58 ($2.50)	☐ #87 ($2.75)	☐ #117 ($3.00)
☐ #12 ($2.50) ☐ #36 ($2.50) ☐ #59 ($2.50)	☐ #88 ($2.75)	☐ #118 ($3.00)
☐ #13 ($3.00) ☐ #37 ($2.50) ☐ #60 ($2.50)	☐ #89 ($2.75)	☐ #119 ($3.00)
☐ #14 ($2.50) ☐ #38 ($2.50) ☐ #61 ($2.50)	☐ #90 ($2.75)	☐ #120 ($3.00)
☐ #15 ($2.50) ☐ #39 ($4.00) ☐ #62 ($4.00)	☐ #91 ($4.00)	☐ #121 ($3.00)
☐ #16 ($2.50) ☐ #40 ($2.75) ☐ #63 ($2.50)	☐ #92 ($2.75)	☐ #122 ($3.00)
☐ #17 ($3.00) ☐ #41 ($2.75) ☐ #64 ($2.50)	☐ #93 ($2.75)	☐ #123 ($3.00)
☐ #18 ($2.50) ☐ #42 ($2.50) ☐ #65 ($2.50)	☐ #94 ($2.75)	☐ #124 ($3.00)
☐ #19 ($2.50) ☐ #43 ($2.50) ☐ #66 ($2.50)	☐ #95 ($2.75)	☐ #125 ($3.00)
☐ #20 ($2.50) ☐ #44 ($2.50) ☐ #67 ($2.50)	☐ #96 ($2.75)	☐ #126 ($3.00)
☐ #23 ($2.50) ☐ #45 ($2.50) ☐ #68 ($2.50)	☐ #99 ($2.75)	☐ #127 ($3.00)
☐ #24 ($2.50) ☐ #46 ($2.50) ☐ #69 ($2.50)	☐ #100 ($3.50)	☐ #128 ($3.00)
☐ #25 ($3.50) ☐ #47 ($2.50) ☐ #70 ($2.50)	☐ #101 ($3.00)	☐ #129 ($3.00)
☐ #26 ($2.50) ☐ #48 ($2.50) ☐ #72 ($2.50)	☐ #102 ($3.00)	☐ #130 ($3.00)
☐ #27 ($2.50) ☐ #49 ($2.50) ☐ #73 ($2.50)	☐ #103 ($3.00)	☐ #131 ($3.00)
☐ #28 ($2.50) ☐ #50 ($3.50) ☐ #74 ($2.50)	☐ #104 ($3.00)	☐ #132 ($3.00)

INTERVIEWS • PREVIEWS
NEWS • REVIEWS • OVERVIEWS

Subscribe to the BEST magazine about comics! Don't miss an issue! Subscribe today!

Send to:

AMAZING HEROES
1800 Bridgegate Street, #101
Westlake Village, CA 91361

Name _____
Address _____
City _____
State _____ Zip _____

Remember with every subscription you get *at no extra cost* the next *Amazing Heroes Preview Special! Act now!*

SERIOUS COMMENTS ABOUT A FUNNY MAGAZINE

"[*Centrifugal Bumble-Puppy*] is a good healthy step in the right direction—over the edge. It looks like it can provide a good environment for cartoonists who take being funny seriously to flourish...I raise my ink bottle and drink a toast hoping it can survive."

—*Art Spiegelman*

"*I find Centrifugal Bumble-Puppy* to contain some of the freshest, most eccentric comic art available today. William Clark, Matthew Finch, and, of course, Norman Dog are standouts in this well-selected group of deviants."

—*Rick Geary*

"There are many people among us who have little or no sense of humor, have no idea what's going on in this world, don't *want* to know what's going on, read lousy comic books, and have bad breath. And then there are those of us who support *Centrifugal Bumble-Puppy*."

—*Peter Bagge*

centrifugal BUMBLE-PUPPY

32 nice big pages • Monthly • Black and white • $2.25 ($3.40 in Canada) • Recommended for mature readers • On sale at all comic book stores

FANTAGRAPHICS BOOKS

GRAPHIC NOVELS

ATTENTION READERS: Publishers' schedules for graphic novels, or albums, or whatever they decide to call them next, are about as reliable as campaign promises. (We've been listing Continuity's graphic novels for over three years as coming out "within six months.") So take all of the listings below with a major grain of salt.

ANOTHER RAINBOW

Still slated for imminent release are **Volumes VII and V in *The Complete Carl Barks*** library, listed God knows how many times in these pages. Be patient, fellows. —JC—

ARROW COMICS

Realm Book II reprints issue #5 through 9, and presents new background information on that world's government and politics. There will also be some new art in the form of pin-ups. It's $4.95 for 112 pages, and due out next April/May 1988. —JH—

B-MOVIE COMICS

February will see the release of ***Reacto-man: the Collection***. It will bring together the full three-issue run of Ken Holewczynski and Wally Stoelting's *Reacto-man*, adding the so-far-unseen fourth issue which concludes the "Warhead" storyline. Running 72 black-and white pages for $4.95, it will sport a Michael T. Gilbert front cover and a Paul Fricke back cover. —EV—

Michael T. Gilbert's cover to the Reacto-Man collection

BLACKTHORNE

With the discontinuation of the Timeline series of color comic books, Blackthorne has opted to publish the gamut as a series of graphic novels. The following, all edited by John Stephenson, should be appearing as 48-page, full-color packages over the next year. All sell for $6.95 unless otherwise indicated.

Operative: Scorpio, written by Jack Herman, pencilled by Danny Taver, and inked by Dan Tolentino, gives us a new twist to superheroes, as three men assume the entity of Scorpio. The editor promises us James Bond-type gadgetry as Scorpio does battle with, yes, you guessed it, Designer Drugs! This will be the first released, going on sale in January.

Also coming in January is *XL*, written by Cliff MacGillivray, pencilled by Dennis Francis, and inked by Bob Versandi. "XL" stands for Xavier Lawrence. Crippled by a tragic auto accident, our hero has lost the use of his legs, and through stimulation of his nerves by a computer system, our Los Angeles-based Mr. Lawrence battles a streetgang that has kidnapped a well-known TV reporter.

In *The Darkling Chronicles*, written by Mark Wayne Harris and illustrated by Chris Miller, we meet a half-man, half-god, agent of destiny, whose mission is to destroy the gods of chaos in a universe prior to ours. Was this entity and his actions responsible for the start off our own universe? Read this book, which runs 60 pages for $8.95, and find out—in February.

Also coming in February is *Locke!* written by Bruce Jones, pencilled by Dennis Francis, and inked by Viktor Laszlo. At 72 pages for $10.95, it's the longest of the Timeline volumes, and tells the story of an angel of death that takes the form of a human being. His mission is to ensure that those who are destined to die, do so according to the council of

The cover to the ***Darkling Chronicles*** *graphic novel from Timeline*

death, and in the style and method they are supposed to. You'd think a cosmic entity would be exempt from job burnout, but such is not the case. Locke's teacher, Tomeron, is such an entity, and when the pressures of his vocation get the best of him, the two entities meet in a cosmic battle.

MAD VII, written by Mark Wayne Harris and illustrated by Dante Fuget and Phil Haxo, premieres in March. This sci-fi story set in the distant future, where Earth is controlled by two computers, EarthNorth and EarthSouth. These computers were developed with organic circuitry so technically, they are living, thinking organisms. However, the person or persons who developed these computers never included a method for these living circuitboards to rest. Because they are always awake, and can never find a method of sleep or rest, they become a bit winky. As a result, many societies are created and there is much barbarianism and computer worship, but little stability. MAD VII is a human Cyborg restructured by EarthNorth, and sent out to search for the inventor of Organic circuitry and a possible method of rejuvenation. MAD VII travels on a motorcycle-like vehicle and brandishes a "plasma" rifle. This "destroying machine" boasts low light sight, has five times the hearing abilities of a human and is ten times as strong. He also can control gravity, and is kept in constant contact with EarthNorth via telepathy. This is another 64-pages for $8.95 deal.

Jack Hunter is written by Bruce Jones and illustrated by Dell Barras. This three-album story involves Jack Hunter, a government agent who has become an amnesiac as the result of an accident. In the March-released **Book One**, titled "Meet Me In St. Louis," we're introduced to Jack and learn how he came to be in the situation he is now in. Wandering aimlessly, he searches for his identity while living in dark alleys and sewers that have become his home. He must also constantly look over his shoulders to avoid the government agents he's sure are after him. In **Book 2** (April), "The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter," Jack meets Claire Ramsey, who helps him escape and stay alive. After being exposed to a hallucinatory nerve gas, Jack is shot and buried. And in May's **Volume 3**, "I Am Crocus," we see the conclusion of the trilogy, as Jack finds out the answers to who, what, and where. Stephenson was purposely vague about the outcome of this story. He did, however, promise an O'Henry-like twist ending.

In addition to the second ***Jack Hunter***, April also brings ***Omega Elite***, written by Greg Swan, pencilled by David Ammerman and Albert Val, and inked by Adrian Moror, the story of a supergroup of intergalactic police based in the Omegan space system. The five elite include Solark (the leader), who has the ability to both change light power into solid form and to fly; Blaze, an Omegan scientist changed into a small sun as the result of a cosmic accident; Power, a humanoid manifestation of chaos (everything this humanoid creates is organic, and is more often then not out of his control); Psi-Storm, an Earth girl whose powers include telekinesis (the ability to move objects without touching them) and telepathy (communication via the mind). This character also exhibits manic depressive tendencies. The fifth Omegan elite is named Ion. She is an android whose basic functions include acting as pilot. She can also control electricity.

Protecting a group of five planets in the Omegan system, they must escort diplomats and ambassadors to the putrid planet Raxxas, to meet for a peace treaty. (The leader of this planet, also named Raxxas, is the father of two of the Omni Men, the stars of a June-released Timeline book.)

May brings ***The Bringers***, written by Bob Ingersoll, pencilled by Dante Fuget, and inked by Sam de LaRosa. This story could very well answer that long-standing question of where we all come from. The story is set on Earth about 20,000 years ago. These "Bringers" are divided into three tribes: Light, Storm, and Ice. There is also a fourth race called the Miners. Led by Kraftlore, they mine an enchanted metal called Darklore. By bleeding on this ore, Kraftlore causes the metal to become enchanted. This metal is then forged into swords through which the Bringers can focus their representative powers over the elements. Many parts of the story tie in the origins of our own myths and legends as well as the genesis of different civilizations.

June sees the arrival of the first of two volumes of ***Omni Men***, written by Steve Perry (no, not the Steve Perry from Journey) and illustrated by Jim Reddington and Rico Rival. It deals with a superhero team sponsored by the N.S.B. (National Security Bureau). Their fearless leader is Thunderer. This seven-foot-tall, fighting powerhouse is four times as strong as a man. Omni Men also includes amongst their members the brother and sister team of Darkon (she) and Ravenlock (he). Both are the progeny

Random events from Milo Manara's ***H.P.*** *and Giuseppe Bergman satirical adventure*

of Raxxas, the intergalatic baddie from *Omega Elite* fame. Zephyr, the youngest member, is a college student that can control the wind and the air.

Then there's Adam 1, an android programmed by Terror Inc. Originally programmed as an assassin, his creator included a "conscience" override, and now this smart aleck replicant works for Omni Men. There's also Warstar, not his name, but his rank in the local Omegan military. Warstar can control light, by making it solid. Take all of these super entities and give them a mission—to stop a nuclear bomb from destroying West Virginia—and you have the basis for this tale.

Also in June, ***Wind-Rage***, written by Mark Wayne Harris and illustrated by Greg Shoemaker, introduces us to Wind-Rage, a courier-turned-spy, who, having lost his right arm, is given a bionic replacement by the N.S.B. (see *Omni Men*) and made to work as a field agent. The evil leader Simon Cassadine (through whose help Wind-Rage became one-armed) is the victim of retaliation, and loses his left leg at the hands (sorry) of Wind-Rage. Not one to easily forget what Wind-Rage has done to him, he uses his shape-changing demon, Knightfall, to seek his revenge and battle with Wind-Rage.

Watch your local comics shops for details on the release of these series. Blackthorne has shown a willingness to cancel projects at a moment's notice if advance sales aren't up to snuff, so don't be surprised if some of these never show up.

—MSM—

CATALAN COMMUNICATIONS

The Spain-based publisher of graphic novel has announced several projects for release, but exact schedules are not available. Although Catalan has published some American material in the past, every project announced so far has been European. (Note: all books are in full color unless otherwise indicated.)

There will be new volumes in Abuli and Bernet's ***Torpedo 1936*** and Mattioli's ***Squeak the Mouse*** series (respectively the fifth and second). Another sequel is Schultheiss's ***Bell's Theorem 2***, and French cartoonist Enki Bilal will be represented through at least four graphic novels: ***Gods in Chaos***, ***The Woman Trap*** (which ran in ***Heavy Metal*** in the Spring of '86), ***Phalanxes of the Black Order***, and ***The Hunting Party*** (several of these written by Pierre Christin, of *Valerian* fame).

Other titles: ***Love Shots*** is written by Paringaux and drawn by Loustal, and ***Fires*** is a fully painted graphic novel by Lorenzo Mattotti. Daniel (***Triton***) Torres is behind ***The Whisper Mystery***, and Jean-Claude Floc'h and Riviere behind ***Titanic***.

Black-and-white album projects include ***Sophie***, a graphic novel by Jose Munoz and Carlos Sampayo (***Joe's Bar, Sinner***) starring a Polish anarchist, as well as Scozzari's adaptation of the

Raymond Chandler novel ***The Blue Dahlia***. There will also be the first of six albums by Alex and Daniel Varenne (a science-fiction/war series under the group title ***Ardeur***). And Milo Manara fans can look forward to Catalan's printing of ***H.P. and Giuseppe Bergman***, a satirical adventure which is actually among the earliest of Manara's works (1978). —KT—

COMICO

Comico will be releasing a full-color collection of the first 12 issues of ***Grendel***, all written by Matt Wagner and drawn by the Pander Brothers, and most of them inked by Jay Geldhof. There will be a new cover, new pin-ups "by various ***Grendel*** artists future and past," and the likely price is around $14.95. This one's scheduled for April. —JC—

CONTINUITY GRAPHICS

As usual, Continuity swears its ***Bucky O'Hare*** (Larry Hama and Michael Golden), ***Freakshow*** (Bruce Jones and Berni Wrightson), and ***Transylvania*** (Neal Adams) graphic novels are imminent. (The latter used to be named ***Frankenstein, Dracula, and Werewolf***, in case you were counting.) Wait and see. —JC—

DC COMICS

Well, although they have lots of new

Commissioner Gordon a la Bolland.

series, DC seems to have a very small amount of graphic novels coming out January will see the release of the collected ***Camelot 3000***, in a 312-page trade paperback, retailing for $12.95. The book will feature the entire 12-issue story, as well as a text feature by Mike W. Barr, and an afterward by Don Thompson. There will be both a DC edition, and a Warner edition, both with separate covers.

Also in late January, a one-shot Prestige book entitled ***Superman: The Earth Stealers*** will appear. This will be written by John Byrne, pencilled by Curt Swan, and inked by Jerry Ordway. This 48-page book tells Superman's most cosmic battle yet, as the entire sector of space that the Earth and moon reside in, is stolen by marauding aliens. The front cover will be a jam cover by Byrne, Swan, and Ordway.

Then in March comes the collected ***Batman: Year One***: the story of Batman's first year of operation, as told by Frank Miller and Dave Mazzucchelli. The book will be 94 pages for $9.95, and will be entirely recolored. No special features are planned, but there will be two editions, and as such, two new covers by Dave Mazzucchelli.

Early April will also see the long-awaited release of ***The Killing Joke***, Alan Moore and Brian Bolland's horrific Batman/Joker one-shot. Bolland, incidentally, is also coloring the book, which will be released in the Prestige Format and will probably sell a couple of billion. DC will be announcing that this book may not be for the youngest readers, since it contains some *very* intense scenes.

Brian Bolland's terrifying interpretation of The Joker

And his no less fearsome version of The Batman, all from ***The Killing Joke***

DC is planning a second ***Saga of the Swamp Thing*** graphic novel, and a collected ***Green Arrow: The Longbow Hunters*** paperback for later in the year. Coming much later in the year will be the ***New Teen Titans*** graphic novel, a 94-page book co-plotted and scripted by Marv Wolfman, and co-plotted, drawn, and colored by George Perez. This book will tell just exactly who Donna Troy really is, and will guest star Wonder Woman. A four-part Prestige Format series is in the works as well: a story about Superman's reputed descendants, by Greg Weisman, Cary Bates, and P. Craig Russell. —AM—

ECLIPSE COMICS

January sees the release of ***The Four Monsters***, the reprint of *Scout* #1-7 by Timothy Truman.

In May, Eclipse will be publishing ***P. Craig Russell's Illustrated Book of the Opera***, which includes Russell's adaptations of *Salome*, *Pelleas and Melisande*, *Parsifal*, *Siegfried*, *The Drinking Song of Earth's Sorrow* and *Unto This World*. It runs a whopping 144 pages, all in full color, and there will be both a regular softcover and signed and numbered hardcover edition.

Miracleman Book One, scheduled for June, reprints the first three issues of Alan Moore's super-hero series, with art by Garry Leach and Alan Davis. It runs 96 pages and features a new cover by current ***Miracleman*** artist John Totleben.

Tentatively scheduled for June is the ***Airboy Graphic Album***, and it will be one of the most important and poignant Airboy stories told to date. It is the story of how the original Airboy lost Valkyrie. It delves into their relationship, and then relates what happened to him when Valkyrie is kidnapped by Misery (not to reappear for 40 years). One of the things which will be attempted will be to clear some confusion about some Golden Age Valkyrie stories done by Fred Kida, and later ones by Carmine Infantino, which seems to contradict one another. Editor, cat yronwode says that the clues to this can be found in the first ***Valkyrie*** mini-series from 1987.

"The story could best be described as the 'Tragedy of Airboy,'" says yronwode, "because it is not happy, and it doesn't end happy. It leads up to what made Davy and Skywolf have their original falling out, which results in Davy not attending Skywolf's wedding, to Skywolf not applying at Nelson Aviation when he was down on his luck. The story also recounts why that Airboy became such a recluse, why he retired to the Napa Valley and chose to live in a monastery. It also explores why he married Penny King, and why he had a child, the current Airboy. This story is deeply moving, a story of losing big, and having to go on with life. For fans of the current ***Airboy*** series, this is the one that tells us how he got to this point. Don't miss it!"

Coming in May and June is a two-part album series reprinting Dell's classic Alex Toth-illustrated ***Zorro*** stories. Each will be 96 pages, black-and-white, and

From P. Craig Russell's Illustrated Book of the Opera: Salome.

will retail for $9.95.

And Denis McFarling's Statue of Liberty/funny-animal epic *Return the Lady* has been indefinitely postponed. —ES/JC—

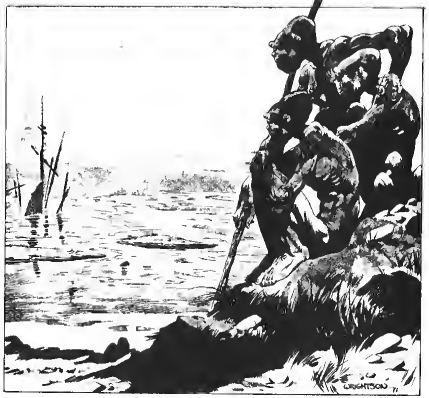
ELSEWHERE PRODUCTIONS

Kyra the female body builder will star in a graphic novel collection of her adventures from Elsewhere Productions. The book will collect the unpublished issues #6, 7, and 8 into a graphic album —"probably our swan song," says publisher Larry Heller, "but it will be potent." The volume will also include a gallery of female body builders posing as Kyra. Yow! —JC—

ESCAPE PUBLISHING

Escape's publishing schedule for the first six months of 1988 is uncertain, but it's hoped that the fourth volume of Eddie Campbell's *Alec* stories will be published around March. Comprising revised versions of the previous three books and 25 per cent new material, this will complete the saga of Alec McGarry for the foreseeable future. The new material isn't intended for publication as a separate book at this stage.

Vigilante Vulture by Darron Northall and Paul Brown and Bob Lynch's *Behold the Hamster*, both previously previewed in these pages as black-and-white titles, will now be published as graphic volumes, although as to when your guess is as good as that of the creators. —FPI—



Ghoulish horror from Berni Wrightson's earliest days

FANTAGRAPHICS BOOKS

First off, here's several titles announced for 1987 that will in fact be appearing in the first few months of 1988 (shame, shame): *Hollywoodland, Holo Brothers I: Curse of the Bloated Toad, Popeye Book 6, Love and Rockets Book 4, The Neat Stuff Collection, New York New York*, and *Buzzbomb*.

Whew. Okay, let's talk about actual new projects.

Berni Wrightson Books One and *Two*: These will be reprinting all of Wrightson's earliest work (self-published and Skywald material), and possibly his entire Warren oeuvre, as well as certain more recent oddities like *Captain Sternn*. Marv Wolfman has written the introduction to the series, the first volume of which ships in February.

Going underground in March, we find *The Complete Crumb Comics Book 2*, which continues the reprints (actually, in most cases, first printings) of more early-'60s Crumb material, including lots of sketchbook pages and over 40 pages of *Fritz the Cat* material. New cover by Crumb and biographical introduction by Marty Pahls—and a 16-page color section this time.

and Munoz and Sampayo's urban squalor in **Nicaragua**, the new **Sinner** story—both from Fantagraphics Books

On the *Nemo Bookshelf* front, March will see the release of *Daydreams and Nightmares: The Black-and-White Art of Winsor McCay*, which offers a generous sampling of art from the creator of *Little Nemo* as well as several biographical pieces. This 180-page volume will sell for $19.95 and is printed in giant size. April will see the release of *Popeye Volume 7*, and then May the second collection of *Little Orphan Annie*—all three edited by Rick Marschall. *Prince Valiant* will start over again with **Volumes 1, 2,** and possibly 3, all before the summer.

In April the second set of *Love and Rockets* small paperbacks will be released: Jaime Hernandez's **The Lost Women** and Gilbert Hernandez's **The Reticent Heart**. Volume 5 of the *Complete Love and Rockets* series should also show up sometime in the Spring, reprinting material from *L&R #13* up.

April is also the release date for the 63-page *Sinner* graphic novel **Nicaragua**. Written and illustrated by Jose Munoz and Carlos Sampayo, it tells the story of what happens when a Nicaraguan delegation spends a few weeks in New York City, hiring Sinner to protect them. This is actually the latest *Sinner* story, published out of sequence because of the timeliness of the story.

Also tentatively scheduled for release during the Spring is a Spain *Trashman* collection. —GJ—

FANTASY WEST PUBLICATIONS

A partial list of the writers and artists featured in this Fantasy West's 120-plus-page book *Magic Makers* is: Brent Eric Anderson, Sergio Aragones, Matthew Ballard, Sarah Byam, David A. Cherry, Dennis Michael Evans, Mike Grell, Jim Groat, Lurine Haines, Bruce Hamilton, John W. Jolley, April Lee, Randy and Jean-Marc Lofficier, Edward Luena, Tom Luth, Mark Lyman, Jan K. Millett-Pratt, Ken Mitchroney, Mocbius, H. Edwin Morrow, James A. Owen, Stan Sakai, Marni Scott, John K. Snyder III, R.J. Swihart Jr., Christopher Tolkien, Harry Turtledove, Charless Vess, Edd Vick, Bryan Waterman and Mel White. Editor/publisher James A. Owens is still negotiating with a few dozen others at press time, but you can expect many more names on the list of contributors when the book comes out in February.

Owen has drawn the cover, and it will be painted by either Luth or Cherry. His framing sequence will be painted by Jolley.

That framing sequence tells of an aged storyteller passing on his verbal repertoire to a new generation. Each tale will be the work of a different creator or team, who have been given free rein to craft a fantastic work of his, her or their own. "It's a graphic novel built of novellas and short stories," says Owen, "and the stories and novellas explore the different aspects of fantasy. We're really stretching the limits of graphic storytelling. This is not going to be your typical swords-and-sorcery and lots of elves and fairies type of fantasy graphic novel.

"The two best that I've gotten in so far is—one that Sergio Aragones is working on is completely phonetic, to understand it you have to read it out loud. It's crazy. That one is written by Dennis Evans. The absolute topper to this whole thing, though, is the one that Mike Grell is illustrating. You *have* to mention this one. Sarah Byam has written it; Grell says she's the hottest thing since Frank Miller. It deals with the plain everyday kind of magic that people walk by and never notice. I'm just blown away."

There will be four different commentaries leading off the book, one of them by Dave Gibbons. *Magic Makers* will cost $12.95 in softcover, and a hardcover will also be available at $39.95. Look for it in your favorite specialty store, or at most regular bookstore chains. —EV—

FIRST COMICS

Hexbreaker, the Badger graphic novel illustrated by Bill Reinhold, has been delayed from its previously-announced December release date and is now scheduled to appear in March. Its focus is on a ritualistic martial arts tournament, a centennial event held in a Brigadoon-esque village which materializes in China. The denizens of this hamlet utilize a form of magic called negative kung, a concept recently introduced in *Badger*'s "Grand Master" trilogy.

According to Howard Chaykin, there will be "one more *Time*[2] before the summer of '88," but we weren't able to get down to specific details regarding it—other than (to reiterate something Chaykin mentioned months ago), "it will deal with a third form of eternal life—an alternative to robothood and zombiedom—and its effect on the other two."

There are plans for *Time*[2] to appear also as a newsstand mini-series, as well as, possibly, other formats. —AE/PC—

Remember? We promised you another "got your nose" joke this issue! From **Hexbreeker**.

GLADSTONE COMICS

With its initial release of four reprint albums out of the way, Gladstone plans to publish one a month in 1988. So far, the schedule looks like this:

January: *Sheriff of Bullet Valley* by Carl Barks, reprinted from Dell's *Donald Duck Four Color #199* (1948).

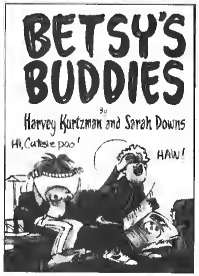
February: *Land Beneath the Ground* by Carl Barks, with a new Don Rosa cover, reprinted from *Uncle Scrooge #13* (1956). Some panels were excised from this story prior to its original publication but will be restored for this edition.

March: This will be a collection of Barks's *Walt Disney's Comics and Stories* Donald Duck 10-pagers based on the theme of Donald being a master at some trade (usually with disastrous results).

April: The spotlight turns to Floyd Gottfredson and Mickey Mouse this time, reprinting the "Hoppy the Kangaroo" serial from the newspaper strips of 1935. —DRD—

KITCHEN SINK PRESS

Two Will Eisner graphic novels are due from Kitchen Sink in the next six months, one a compilation of previously-published material and the other brand-new. The former is *Life Force*, the series which originally ran in *Will Eisner's Quarterly* and the earlier *Spirit* magazine. The graphic novel will feature new front and back covers by Eisner and eight



Klassic Kurtzman

new pages to smooth the transitions between the original installments. Due in March or April, *Life Force* will be available in both softcover and limited, signed hardcover editions.

The new Eisner graphic novel will be titled *Will Eisner's City Life Sketchbook* (subtitled "Essays on City Living"). It won't be a sketchbook in the sense of a collection of an artist's drawing, but rather a sketchbook in the larger sense of observations. Similar to Eisner's *New York* graphic novel, *City Life Sketchbook* will feature a series of vignettes covering different aspects of city life. Some of the chapters include "Time," "Space" and "Smell." Approximately 72 pages in length, it will probably appear in May and also will be available in hard and softcover editions.

Making its appearance in March will be *Betsy's Buddies* by Harvey Kurtzman and Sarah Downs, a collection of full color pages of social satire that originally ran in *Playboy* during the late '70s and early '80s. Publisher Denis Kitchen describes the work as a true collaboration between Kurtzman and Downs—"they co-wrote it, co-pencilled it, co-inked it, co-colored it, right down the middle." The 44-page collection will include all of the pages that ran in *Playboy*, as well as several the magazine rejected. Available in hardcover only, a tentative price of $13.95 has been set.

The next collection of Kurtzman's work after *Betsy's Buddies* should be the long-awaited compilation of *Hey Look!* pages. Technical problems in shooting some of the pages from the actual comics have held the book up, but Kitchen says it should appear sometime in the last half of 1988.

Certainly some of the biggest news from Kitchen Sink is their obtaining the rights to reprint, in their entirety, two classic comic strips—*Flash Gordon* and Al Capp's *Li'l Abner*.

Both strips will be reprinted in chronological order—with one exception. Prior to starting *Flash Gordon* with the first strips, Kitchen Sink will reprint the 1952 run of daily strips. "The reason for that," Kitchen says, "is that 1952 was a very unusual year. Harvey Kurtzman was asked by King Features to write the scripts and to lay it out. For one year, he did that. What makes it more interesting is the year that Harvey wrote it and laid it out, he enlisted the help of some of his E.C. buddies. Frank Frazetta pencilled a good part of the year and Will Elder and Jack Davis inked a lot of it."

The 1952 *Flash Gordon* volume will run 112-120 pages in order to include the entire Kurtzman-produced run. In addition to reprinting the published strips, the book will include many of Kurtzman's original pencil layouts, which he preserved in his own archives. The oversized book (approximately 10 by 12 inches) will display four strips to a page. Appearing in February, the book will carry a price of $13.95 for the softcover edition. A limited hardcover edition will be signed by Kurtzman.

Subsequent volumes of the series will reprint the strip in chronological order, starting at its beginning in 1934 with Alex Raymond art.

Li'l Abner will debut in April in a 150-plus page quarterly format that reproduces two daily strips per page. Each volume will reprint an entire year of daily strips, beginning with the first in the fall of 1934.

The first volume, at an estimated 190 pages, will be a bit larger than subsequent volumes, because it will include the strips from the fall of 1934 and all of 1935.

Each volume will feature an introduction by one of Capp's associates or friends. "Capp had a wide group of friends," Kitchen notes. "There were some celebrities that he was close to, like Bob Hope and Lucille Ball. Further down the road, we're getting into the area where politics become very different and we expect to have introductions from William F. Buckley and John Updike." The introduction to the first volume will be by his widow, Catherine, his original assistant on the strip.

The volumes will appear in both softcover and hardcover editions. Although prices have not yet been set, Kitchen said he hoped the softcover would sell for about $14, with the hardcover probably at twice that.

—BE—

Alan Moore and Hunt Emerson gang up on the Bible

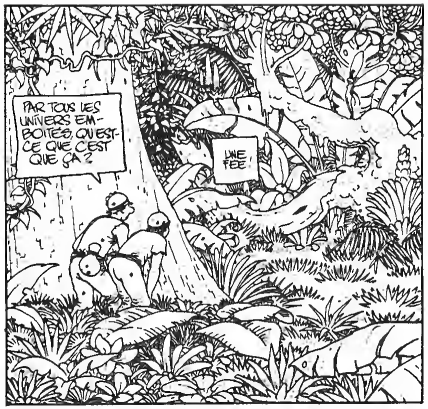
KNOCKABOUT

Knockabout's major Christmas 1986 release in the U.K. ought to arrive in the U.S.A. for January. Titled *Outrageous Tales From The Old Testament*, it's a deliberate two fingers to those who consider the Bible a fount of good taste and a guide to a moral life. The contributors were given free rein with the topic, with some choosing a literal or exact interpretation, as in the case of Brian Bolland's "Miracle of Elisha" from the second Book of Kings and Dave Gibbons's adaptation of events at Sodom and Gomorrah, while Mike Matthews and the team of Alan Moore and Hunt Emerson have elected to convey the gist of their respective fables. Other contributors include Kim Deitch, Julie Hollings, Graham Higgins and Neil Gaiman with Dave McKean.

Outrageous Tales From the Old Testament is priced at $9.95, as is issue #11 of the irregular eponymous *Knockabout* anthology title. The theme for the issue is Mothers and Sons, but beyond promising contributions from the regular Knockabout posse of Matthews, Shelton, Emerson, and Higgins nothing has been finalized.

One of the more acclaimed British comics of the past year has been *Oink!*, giving the perennial British humor title a much needed kick into the '80s. Although ostensibly for children, its irreverence has garnered the comic a considerable cult following among adults, and Knockabout will be mining this market with two volumes of *Uncle Pigg's Crackling Tales for Children*. Uncle Pigg being, of course, the editor of the comic. Contents will be culled from the first 23 issues and so you can look forward to Pete and His Pimple, Tom Thug (both by Lew Stringer), Burp, Rubbish Man, Harry the Head, Frank Sidebottom, Snatcher Sam, Weedy Willy, and Banx's surreal Mr. Big Nose.

—FPI—



From the next Epic Moebius album—still in the original French here

MARVEL COMICS

Marvel will be offering at least one reprint trade paperback a month during 1988.

The Savage Land (80 pp., $5.95)—offers the X-Men stories from Marvel Fanfare #1-4, written by Chris Claremont, illustrated by Michael Golden, Dave Cockrum and Paul Smith. New cover by John Buscema. Shipping in January.

Six From Sirius (128 pp., $8.95)—The Epic science fiction series by Doug Moench and Paul Gulacy, mixing interstellar adventure with political intrigue. Complete in one novel, new cover by Gulacy. Shipping in February.

The Thing (144 pg., $6.95)—The stories introducing "Project Pegasus," the high-tech holding facility for super criminals. Written by Ralph Macchio and Mark Gruenwald, art by John Byrne and George Perez, starring The Thing, Giant Man, Deathlok and others. Representing *Marvel Two-in-One* #53-58, 60. Shipping in February.

Hawkeye (96 pg., $5.95)—Hawkeye's first solo limited series written and pencilled by Mark Gruenwald, in which the archer meets, fights and marries Mockingbird (in that order?). New cover by Gruenwald. Shipping in March.

Hercules (96 pg., $5.95)—The first Hercules limited series written and drawn by Bob Layton, in which the demi-god is thrown out of Olympus for being too rowdy. He tours the best bars of the galaxy, and tries to out-drink Galactus. New cover by Layton. Shipping in April.

Power Pack (128 pg., $7.95)—Introducing Power Pack, the Kymellians, Friday the Smartship, and the marauding Snarks. Written by Louise Simonson, pencilled by June Brigman, inked by Bob Wiacek. Reprinting *Power Pack* #1-4, new cover by Brigman and Wiacek. Shipping in May.

Spider-Man (Price and size to be announced)—The saga of the living costume by Tom DeFalco, Ron Frenz and Brett Breeding, which led to the events of *Spider-Man* #300 (June).

Further down the road are planned a second *The 'Nam* collection (July), a collection of the *Punisher* limited series by Steven Grant, Mike Zeck and Mike Vosburg (August), another *G.I. Joe* book (September), *Machine Man* by Tom DeFalco, Herb Trimpe, by Barry Windsor-Smith (October), and *Black Dragon* by Chris Claremont and John Bolton, (November).

As for new books, here's what we have:

The cover to Bob Layton's **Hercules** *graphic novel*

The *Shadow* graphic novel, entitled **Hitler's Astrologer**, has been announced for Spring release. Written by Denny O'Neil, pencilled by Michael Kaluta, and inked by Russ Heath, the 48-page full-color graphic novel will be published in hardcover for $12.95.

Bob Layton takes the Olympian demi-god on another romp across the cosmos in a brand new *Hercules* graphic novel. This time, Hercules is hunted by his own son!

A prequel graphic novel to *Greenberg the Vampire, Greenberg the Vampire II*, will appear in late summer. The planned 70-page book will be written by creator J.M. DeMatteis, and painted by Mark Badger. The framing sequence of the story deals with Oscar Greenberg's wedding day, on which he gives his vampiress bride-to-be, Denise, a manuscript which tells about how they met. We are privy to the manuscript, and thus unfolds the story of how Greenberg became a vampire, what that meant to him and his family, and how he met and fell in love with Denise. This book is titled **Fangs For the Memories**.

There are two more albums to go in the Moebius collection. Volume 5, **The Gardens of Aedena**, is an all-new graphic novel featuring the cast of **Upon a Star**, and is released in January. Then Volume 6, **Pharagonesia and Other Strange Stories**, will showcase several odds and ends from the Moebius collection, bringing this cycle to an end. But there will almost certainly be more Moebius work from Marvel in the future.

Then, finally, there is *Willow*, which will adapt the upcoming George Lucas, Ron Howard film collaboration, based on a screenplay by George Lucas. The epic fantasy adventure includes designs created for the movie by Moebius (see?). *Willow* will also appear as a three-part Marvel Comics limited series during the summer. —JCAM—

NBM/FLYING BUTTRESS

The sixth *Corto Maltese* album, **The Early Years of Corto Maltese**, takes place in North China around the turn of the century and features Corto's meeting with his archnemesis Rasputin. This album will be printed in full color, the first of the series to do so.

May sees the release of **Roxanna Book 3, The Riege Master**. It's a 64-page softcover, in color as usual, selling for $8.95. Also in May, NBM will be printing a collection of the first three issues of the Renegade comic *Silent Invasions*. There will be three more books in the series, one scheduled for Summer '88, the last two for '89.

And in June, *The Mercenary* **Book 4** will appear as a hardcover, simultaneously with a softcover collecting **Books 3** and **4**.

On the reprint front, **Book 7** and **8** of the *Terry and the Pirates* softcovers (64 pages for $6.95) will appear in January and April, while *Wash Tubbs* **Volumes 2, 3**, and **4** are scheduled for release through June. Each is 192 pages, and costs $16.95 (softcover) or $32.50 (hardcover). —GJ—

PIED PIPER PRESS

Pied Piper has dropped the *Cobalt Blue* graphic album from its schedule. *The Company* is still a work-in-progress, and only three titles are scheduled for the first half of 1988.

In the full-size trade paperback format, Pied Piper will be releasing *Kerry and the Scary Things*. The Kerry of the title is a small boy who loves monsters: movie monsters; comics monsters; tv monsters, etc... Somehow, he gets a copy of "Dr. McNamee's Monster Guide" and finds himself in a world of frightening creatures who offer a few surprises of their own. *Kerry and the Scary Things* will run 52 pages and retail at $6.95. The book will carry the "Magic Times Book" imprint.

In a slightly smaller format, under the "Tiny Tales" imprint, Pied Piper will be releasing two children's books: *Cookie Pirates* and *What Do I Know?*. Both books are scripted by Ron Courtney, *Cookie Pirates* is illustrated by Scott Rosema, and *What Do I Know?* is illustrated by Bill Perry.

"We think that these are charming and fun illustrated-text children's books which will be popular with the two- to nine-year-olds," says publisher Mark Hamlin. "Moms and dads should also love them."

These titles will retail at $2.95. —SW—

STARBLAZE/ DONNING

Are you ready for an onslaught of graphic novels and novels with graphics? Good! Then Donning is ready for you, too!

The second issue of *A Distant Soil*, **Knights of the Angel**, will run 120 pages. Even at that, creator Colleen Doran will have streamlined the story and completely redrawn the art, which originally saw print in a nine-issue run from WaRP. Virtually all of the first six issues of the originally series, and then some, will have seen print by the end of this volume, and all of the major characters will have been introduced.

Doran has been striving to make a complex story comprehensible. "The readers were upset," she says, "because they couldn't tell the difference between the characters. They didn't know them well enough. I've spent a lot more time emphasizing who they were, and gave them a chance to speak with their mouths instead of through captions all the time, which I think is redundant in a comic. Damn captions! Characters like Corinne and Dunstan and Siressa and Rinaldo—all these ciphers—I've tried to flesh out a good deal more." Photographic references, too, have their place in her effort for verisimilitude. "I've been having fun going around with my 35 mm. All of the stuff that happens takes place in real locations. There's a place near here called Waterside, and part of the story is set there."

First in a proposed six-issue adaptation of the works of Mark Twain is *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. It is a true graphic novel, not an illustrated text like the Starblaze Classics [about which see below]. Illustrator Phil Foglio enjoys the challenge of adapting a book so far removed from the usual science fiction stories for which he is known. "However," he says, "There are certain problems that I remember from when I was adapting *Another Fine Myth* for Asprin, in that it is impossible to do a straight transliteration. Most of the changes consist of editing things out. For instance, something I'm taking out: Chapter Eight consists of five pages. It's just *stuck* in the middle of the book, talking about Tom and his friend galumphing off in the forest playing hooky from school. Real charming, real cute, but does absolutely nothing to advance the story.

"I'm going to try to give it a very *Calvin and Hobbes* feel. When Tom talks about being a pirate, suddenly he *is* a pirate. We see what he sees. When somebody talks about being a riverboat, we see a riverboat luffing down the street. I'll freely admit that I got the idea from the success with which Bill Watterson carried it off. But before he made it big with *Calvin and Hobbes* he was a big Mark Twain fanatic, so I certainly hope he won't mind."

He promises that his adaptation will be "much better than *Classics Illustrated*." He is in the process of hiring almost a half-dozen people—like Doug Rice—to help him in production and will deliver a finished product to Starblaze. His goal is eventually to put together a studio like those employed in Japan to create strips for manga. "It's the wave of the future," he says.

The second *Aria* is called **The Knights of Aquarius**, but will present not only a translation from the French story by the same name but also another, **The Tears of the Goddess**. Happily, the two stories are related. Aria travels to the far north in search of a lake with strange healing properties. This issue will not be squarebound as the last one was; it will instead be a trade paperback similar to the rest of the Starblaze line.

Duncan & Mallory's third outing is in **Duncan & Mallory and the Raiders**. There is a very Gilbert and Sullivan feel to the story, which has our... well, not exactly "heroes" happening across a sacked village. Wouldn't you know that soon after, the hapless pair run across the very raiders who pillaged it? And guess who has joined the raiders—why, it's those con artists almost-par-excellent Bilgewater and Sadie (nee writer Robert Asprin and artist Mel. White), and big, but dumb, Humphrey.

"It is really one of the funniest scripts Bob has ever done," says White, "The pacing is just incredibly good. I'm pleased with the way the whole thing turned out; it was just so much fun to do." She further revealed that sales on the second *Duncan & Mallory* actually where higher than on the first issue, an almost unheard-of circumstance in comics.

Fever Dreams, the second book in the adaptation of *Gate of Ivrel*, will present "doom and gloom and dire machinations in the halls of Leth," according to artist (and scripter and letterer and colorist and painter) Jane Fancher. It will chronicle the escape from Saen and will introduce the "villain" in a story during which one of the protagonists, Vanye, is dreaming, deep in the throes of a poison-induced sleep. Two characters are introduced who weren't in the original novel, part of Fancher and [novelist] C.J. Cherryh's carefully-planned expansion on the basic plotline. One of the new characters, Mungho, is likely to be in the series for the duration. Fancher says, "He's real cute. He's got two expressions: lowered Neanderthal brow and gleaming grin with gap teeth. He's darling."

The book is scheduled to appear in February, following by a month the publication of **Exile's Gate**, the fourth [text] novel in the "gate" series. Fancher has been designing fonts on computer to use in the graphic novel, which will retain the hand-lettered look while easing mid-production revisions.

Then Cherryh and Fancher, who has moved from Seattle to Oklahoma to join her, start jamming on further descriptions, "Scum and villainy in the halls of Leth. An Innocent Abroad. Depravity and murder and assaults on virtue! Everybody's after Vanye."

The third *Mage: The Hero Discovered* will appear in May. It will conclude Matt Wagner's first [of three] series about the incipient hero Kevin Matchstick. Issues **#12** through **15** will be included, in color.

Michael Kaluta is illustrating the second Starblaze Classic. It is *Metropolis*, written by Thea von Harbou. She was the wife, and scenarist, of Fritz Lang, the creator of the classic silent movie. "The feeling of the illustrations is the feel of the film," says Kaluta, "It's mostly in charcoal and pastel; it gives it that gritty film look." His work will be integrated closely with the text through chapter headings and closings, endpapers and cover stamping, as well as a plethora of full-pagers. "There is some symbolic stuff in there," he says, "Some straightforward illustration, some mere decoration. I've been wanting to do it since I was ten, and the movie is so perfect an image that it's difficult to assimilate."

Robotech Art **Volume 3** is subtitled "The Sentinels," and will cover the new *Robotech* season in depth. It is written almost entirely by producer Carl Macek. —EV—

The hero in C.J. Cherryh and Jane Fancher's ***Exile's Gate***.

STARHEAD COMICS

What's well over 230 pages, approximately $8.95, about seven by ten inches and politically strange? (Let's leave correctness and incorrectness out of this.) Chances are, if you're a cool dude, it's *The Life and Times of Morty the Dog*. Starhead honcho Michael Dowers doesn't pretend it's anywhere near a complete collection of Steve Willis's quirky canine: "Of course it's not going to be able to cover everything. Some things have already been printed [lately]: the stories in *Morty the Dog* #1 and in *Morty, the Dog Who Walks Like a Man* (both from Starhead). Also there's a few other stories scattered here and there—and I don't know where they wound up." The emphasis will be on strips, so a wealth of single cartoons will also not be collected.

Morty appeared in a huge number of small press publications in the 1982-1987 period, most of them with minuscule print runs. Creator Willis has often contended that the dog took on a life of his own. The publisher of most of his recent projects thinks he must be Willis's biggest fan. "I feel that anything by Steve Willis is like a religious object, says Dowers. "I like to compare him to the people who did the Sunday funnies around 1910-1920. There were some pretty wild, pretty surreal things going on. I can't think of anyone else he's like or who he's influenced by. I definitely see R. Crumb in his work and he'll admit it if you corner him—but he really stands on his own with his sense of humor that hasn't been around since the old Winsor McCay stuff and *Smokey Stover*."

The book will be divided into chapters, and each chapter will follow a progression from early to later work. The chapters include one on Morty's cameos in other, primarily political, stories, one of his early appearances and one that's just for fun. "I have songs, a couple of poems and mazes—so this will be kind of a fun activity chapter."

There are two pages at the end of the book that no one has ever seen. They are a scene straight out of *On the Waterfront* where Willis confronts his errant creation in the back seat of a cab. Willis killed off the dog for what he swears is the final time in *The Rise and Fall of Morty the Dog* (again, also from Starhead), so this may genuinely be his last appearance. —EV—

TITAN BOOKS

The Titan list will undergo a major expansion during 1988 as they bring the best of European comic strip material to British shores. They've acquired the U.K. publication rights for the Moebius stories currently being published by Marvel in the U.S.A., and for the Catalan Communications list. Their license to the reprint DC material also continues with an uninterrupted bi-monthly publication of black-and-white *Swamp Thing* volumes reprinting the Alan Moore, Steve Bissette and John Totleben stories. Available during the first six months of the year will be **Volumes 5-7**, reprinting *Swamp Thing* **#37-48**, and also a *Superman* collection reprinting Alan Moore's "Last Superman Story" and the Moore-and-Gibbons collaboration for the 1985 *Superman Annual*.

The above material is all for British publication only, but the Titan editions of the Hernandez Brothers material are being released in the USA as limited editions by Fantagraphics Books. The second Jaime Hernandez volume is titled **Mechanics**, and the second Gilbert Hernandez book is **Duck Feet**. They will be available in May, and as was the case with the previous Hernandez books, the selection of material in the Titan editions will differ from that in the simultaneously issued American publications (which will, this time around, carry different titles, in order to further confuse everything).

Judge Dredd **Volumes 19-22** will be published roughly every six weeks between January and June, with art from Ian Gibson, Steve Dillon, John Higgins and Brett Ewins respectively, and the stories from John Wagner and Alan Grant as usual. The Gibson book by and large contains shorter stories, including a tale explaining the only way to avoid the law in Mega-City One ("It Pays to

Coming from Titan Books **Nemesis Book 6**, *with art by John Hickleton.*

Be Mental"), and "Bob's Law," in which chaos ensues when a bureaucrat redefines the boundaries of the city sectors, and "Love Story," in which a woman becomes obsessed with Dredd. "The Alabammy Blimps" occupy the major portion of Dillon's book as Dredd must rescue a Brit-Cit diplomat whose craft crashes in swampland run by rough and ready cannibal women, and there's also the Truman Capote inspired "Slick Dickens." ***Watchmen*** colorist John Higgins is also a top notch artist, and his stories include "Letter From a Democrat" and its sequel "Revolution," revealing the extents to which the Judges will go to maintain control of the population, and a menace that they can't deal with, "The Exploding Man," "The Wally Squad," the undercover judges appear in book 22, as does the story of "The Haunting of Sector House 9" and the revelation of what occurred there.

The Steve Dillon drawn ***Rogue Trooper*** **Volume 6** sees a change of direction for the genetic infantryman and a new scripter in Simon Geller. Rogue leaves Nu-Earth to become a sort of galactic hitman, sponsored by an alien race whose aim is to eradicate those responsible for engendering or prolonging war. New artist John Hickleton is introduced in ***Nemesis*** **Book 6**, written as usual by Pat Mills. Titled "The Two Torquemadas," it concerns the Terminator meeting his namesake from the Spanish Inquisition, with Nemesis and Purity on hand to wait for Thoth, who is working his way back through history murdering all Torquemada's previous incarnations. ***The ABC Warriors*** spin out of *Nemesis* and back into their own series with **Volume 3**, written by Mills and illustrated by two new artists, Simon Bisley and SMS.

Zenith **Book 1** is published in April, written by Grant Morrison and illustrated by Steve Yeowell. *Zenith* was the first straight super-hero strip to appear in ***2000 AD***, although the character was more concerned with maintaining his recording career and using his abilities to create a career as a media celebrity than saving the world. Events, however, conspire to force him to play an active part in reforming a super-hero team from the '60s to combat a menace last encountered during the second World War.

The Titan strip reprints continue with **Volume 6** of ***Modesty Blaise***, **The Iron God**. As with previous collections, this volume contains three complete strips written by Peter O'Donnell, "The Gallows Bird," "The Wicked Gnomes," and the title strip, all illustrated by Enrique Romero. "The Man With The Golden Gun" and "Octopussy" are adapted in the second ***James Bond*** book, with art by Hovak and Jim Lawrence scripts.

The Art of Brian Bolland, written by long-standing friend Dave Harwood, and ***The Writing of Alan Moore*** by Neil Gaiman are set for March release, with both containing previously unseen work by their subjects. —FPI—

WARP/FATHER TREE PRESS

As 1988 is the tenth anniversary of the first publication of ***Elfquest*** **#1**, publisher Richard Pini has very big plans coming up for the WaRP/Father Tree line of books. The reissue of ***The Elfquest Gatherum*** **Vol. I** has already come out, and as you read this, ***The Law and Chaos Book*** by Wendy Pini (128 pages as $16.95), chronicling her five-year effort to conceive singlehandedly an animated version of Michael Moorcock's *Stormbringer*, has been out for a few weeks. Wendy Pini eventually realized that the dream was too big for one woman to accomplish, certainly without the advantage of five to ten million spare dollars to kick around, and so she was forced to abandon. Cinenia's loss is WaRP's gain.

Coming out in April of '88 is **Volume II** of ***The Elfquest Gatherum***, covering sketches, writings, and other never-before-seen background material for the portion of the Elfquest saga not covered in **Volume I**, and including some of *Siege on Blue Mountain*. Depending on what the future holds for the *Elfquest* saga, there may be a volume **III**, or at least a **II-and-a-half**.

Also, over the next four years Father Tree will reissue the four color books of *Elfquest* originally published by Donning. Each volume will contain about 20 pages of new material, and the art will be completely recolored. Wendy Pini, always pressed by deadlines, feels that while the coloring in the first edition represented about seventy-five per cent of what she envisioned, she wants the new edition to come closer to that magical number of 100 per cent. Overall the presentation will be improved, and these volumes will be followed by **V** and **VI**, to include the *Siege at Blue Mountain* series. The revised **Volume I** is scheduled to appear in June or July of 1988.

Also coming up in February of '88 is **Volume II** of ***The Blood of Ten Chiefs***, the anthology of *Elfquest* stories by such noted fantasy writers as Piers Anthony, C.J. Cherryh, Nancy Springer, Robert Asprin, Lynn Abbey, and Diana Paxton, to name just a host. The mass market edition of **Volume I** will be out at the end of '87, and contracts have already been signed for a third and fourth volume. —ABC—

PUBLISHERS

AARDVARK-VANAHEIM: P.O. Box 1674, Station "C," Kitchener, Ontario, CANADA N2G 4R2

ACME PRESS: 5-9 Beadon Road, London, ENGLAND W6 0AE

ADVENTURE PUBLICATIONS: P.O. Box 15279, Washington DC 20003-0270

AIRCEL PUBLISHING: 2660 Southvale Crescent, Ottawa, Ontario, CANADA K1B 4W5

AMERICAN SPLENDOR: P.O. Box 18471, Cleveland Hts., OH 44118

AMERICOMICS: P.O. Box 1216, Longwood, FL 32750

ANDROMEDA PUBLICATIONS: 367 Queen Street West, Toronto, Ontario, CANADA M5V 2A4

ANTARCTIC PRESS: P.O. Box 290221, San Antonio, TX 78280-1621

APPLE COMICS: P.O. Box 787, Bethel, CT 06801

ARCHIE COMICS: 325 Fayette Avenue, Mamaroneck, NY 10543

ARROW COMICS: 1269 Russell, Ypsilanti, MI 48198

ATTITUDE ZONE: P.O. Box 99309, Tacoma, WA 98499

B-MOVIE COMICS: 425 LaMonte Terrace, South Bend, IN 46616

BAM PRODUCTIONS: 811 E. State Street, Suite 211, Sharon, PA 16146

BEANWORLD PRESS: 7060 N. Sheridan, Chicago, IL 60626

BLACK TIE STUDIOS: 6383 Hunters Place, Memphis, TN 38118

BLACKBIRD COMICS: P.O. Box 3211, Austin, TX 78764

BLACKTHORNE COMICS: 786 Black Thorne Avenue, El Cajon, CA 92020

BLUE COMET COMICS: 1708 Magnolia Avenue, Manhattan Beach, CA 90266

C&T GRAPHICS: 45 Wilcox Street, Rochester, NY 14607

CA GRAPHICS: 24 West Prospect Street, Waldwick, NJ 07463

CAT-HEAD COMICS: 293 Mather Street, Apt. A, Oakland, CA 94611

CATALAN COMMUNICATIONS: 43 E. 19th Street, Suite 200, New York, NY 10003

CHORUS COMICS: 309 E. 8th Street, #B2, New York, NY 10009

CHROME TIGER: P.O. Box 547, Bellevue, WA 98009-0547

CODA: P.O. Box 9386, S. Charleston, WV 25309

COMICO: 1547 DeKalb Street, Norristown, PA 19401

COMICS INTERVIEW: Rt. #1, Box 1241, Clayton, GA 30525

CONTINUITY ASSOCIATES: 65 W. 45th Street, 10th Floor, New York, NY 10036

CORMAC: 1214 W. Huron, Ann Arbor, MI 48103

CRIMSON DREAMS: 7980 Crestview Lane, Denver, CO 80221

CRYSTAL COMICS: 23 Pittman Lane, Sicklerville, NJ 08081

DARK HORSE COMICS: 3376 NE Sands Blvd., Portland, OR 97232

DARKLINE PUBLICATIONS: P.O. Box 1356, Peru, IN 46970

DC COMICS INC.: 666 5th Avenue, New York, NY 10103

DOUBLE DIAMOND: P.O. Box 871, Southbridge, MA 01550

DRAGON LADY PRESS: 200 Queen Street West, Toronto, Ontario, CANADA M5V 1Z2

DRAGON'S TEETH: 90 S. 6th Street, San Jose, CA 95112

ECLIPSE COMICS: P.O. Box 1099, Forestville, CA 95436

ELSEWHERE PRODUCTIONS: P.O. Box 3903, Lakewood, CA 90714-3903

ENTERTAINMENT PUBLISHING: 151 Chandler Street, Worcester, MA 01609

ENTROPY ENTERPRISES: 5306 Knox Avenue, N. Brooklyn Center, MN 55430-3903

ESCAPE PUBLISHING: 150 Munster Road, London, ENGLAND SW6 5RA

ESCAPE VELOCITY PRESS: 750 Sylvan #38, Mountain View, CA 94041

ETERNITY COMICS: P.O. Box 3185, Thousand Oaks, CA 91359

FANTACO ENTERPRISES: 21 Central Avenue, Albany, NY 12210-1391

FANTAGOR PRESS: 27 W. Bannister, Kansas City, MO 64114

FANTAGRAPHICS BOOKS: 1800 Bridgegate Street, Suite 101, Westlake Village, CA 91361

FANTASY WEST PUBLICATIONS: 129 W. Center, Taylor, AZ 85939

FIRST COMICS: 435 N. LaSalle, Chicago, IL 60610

FISHWRAP PRODUCTIONS: 5540 Alameda Avenue #B, Richmond, CA 94804

FOX COMICS: 17 Brookville Road, Toorak, Victoria, Australia 3142

FRAGMENTS WEST: 3908 East 4th Street, Long Beach, CA 90814

GENESIS WEST: P.O. Box 845, Simi, CA 93062

GLADSTONE COMICS: P.O. Box 2079, Prescott, AZ 86302

GRAPHITTI: 515 W. Valencia Drive, Unit E, Fullerton, CA 92632

GRAPHXPRESS: P.O. Box 32292, Tucson, AZ 85751

GUMP PUBLICATIONS: 6216 Samuell, Suite 117, Dallas, TX 92632

HARRIER COMICS: 33, Chester Road, Northwood, Midx., England HA6 1BG

HARVEY COMICS: 250 W. 57th St., Suite 514, New York, NY 10107

HERO COMICS: 6433 California Avenue, Long Beach, CA 90805

INVASION COMICS: P.O. Box 488, Fort Washington, MD 20744

J.Q. ENTERPRISES: P.O. Box 2221, Hollywood, CA 90078

JABBERWOCKY GRAPHIX: 4109 Pleasant Run, Irving, TX 75038

JUST IMAGINE: 11 South 767 Book Road, Naperville, IL 60565

KILLIAN BARRACKS PRESS: P.O. Box 467251, Atlanta, GA 32346

KITCHEN SINK PRESS: No. 2 Swamp Road, Princeton, WI 54968

KZ COMICS: 14309 Madison Avenue, Lakewood, OH 44107

LAST GASP ECO-FUNNIES: 2180 Bryant Street, San Francisco, CA 94110

LEAPING WEASEL: 8516 Creek Street, Albuquerque, NM 87113

MAD DOG GRAPHICS: P.O. Box 931686, Hollywood, CA 90093

MANUSCRIPT PRESS: Box 1762, Wayne, NY 07470

MARVEL COMICS GROUP: 398 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10016

MATRIX GRAPHIC SERIES: P.O. Box 1141, Snowdon Station, Montreal, Quebec

MEGATON COMICS: P.O. Box 45, Elgin, Il 60121-0045

METRO COMICS: P.O. Box 4569, Toms River, NJ 08654

MILE HIGH COMICS: 2151 W. 56th Avenue, Denver, CO 80221

MILKY WAY GRAPHICS: P.O. Box 381, Sleepy Eye, MN 56085

MINOTAUR BOOKS: 251 Swanston, Street, Melbourne, Victoria, AUSTRALIA 3000

MIRAGE STUDIOS: P.O. Box 417, Haydenville, MA 01039

NBM/FLYING BUTTRESS: 35-53 70th Street, Jackson Heights, NY 11372

NICOTAT COMICS: P.O. Box 1841, Beaverton, OR 97075

NIGHT REALM: 440 The Kingsway, Islington, Ontario, CANADA M9A 3W2

NORTHERN LIGHTS: 909 E. Fifth Street, Duluth, MN 55805

NOW COMICS: 332 S. Michigan Ave., Suite 1540, Chicago, IL 60604

OCEAN COMICS: 88 Tiernan Avenue, Warwick, RI 02886

ONWARD COMICS: P.O. Box 3684, Chico, CA 95927

ORACLE COMICS: P.O. Box 2803, Southfield, MI 48037-2803

OUTSIDE COMICS: P.O. Box 533401, Orlando, FL 32853

PERRY DOG PRESS: 1244 Americana #1603, Mesquite, TX 75150

PIED PIPER PRESS: P.O. Box 6969, Grand Rapids, MI 49516

PINNACLE COMICS: Box 47, Gilbertsville, NY 13776

PIRANHA PRESS: 202 E. 75th Street, Suite 3F, New York, NY 10021

PURE IMAGINATION: 88 Lexington 9-C, New York, NY 10016

PYRAMID PRODUCTIONS: P.O. Box 8284, South Bend, IN 46637

R.A.K. GRAPHICS: 241 E. Thornton Street, Akron, OH 44311

RENEGADE PRESS: 2705 E. 7th Street, Long Beach, CA 90804

RIP OFF PRESS: P.O. Box 14158, San Francisco, CA 94114

SLAVE LABOR GRAPHICS: 983 S. Bascom Ave., San Jose, CA 95128

SPIDER OPTICS: 1715 Ridgedale Ave., Penticton, B.C. CANADA V2A6W5

SPOTLIGHT COMICS: 30 Ridge St., New Milford, CT 06776

STARBLAZE GRAPHICS: 5659 Virginia Beach Blvd., Norfolk, VA 23502

STARHEAD COMIX: 3615 Phinna, Seattle, WA 98103

STEELDRAGON PRESS: Box 7253, Powderhorn Station, Minneapolis, MN 55407

STOP DRAGON PRESS: Box 8156, Paducah, KY 42002-8156

STRAWBERRY JAM COMICS: P.O. Box 40430, Berkeley, CA 94704-4430

SWORD IN STONE: 16130 Gouin West, St. Genevieve, Quebec, CANADA H9H 1C8

T.A.P. PRODUCTIONS: P.O. Box 39042, San Antonio, TX 78218-1042

TARGET COMICS: 900 Long Blvd. #467, Lansing, MI 48911

THOUGHTS & IMAGES: P.O. Box 19419, Seattle, WA 98109

THUNDER BAAS PRESS: P.O. Box 1614, Baltimore, MD 21203

TITAN BOOKS LTD.: 58 St. Giles High Street, London, WC2H 8LH ENGLAND

TRIAD: 41 Highland Road, Staten Island, NY 10308

TRU STUDIOS: 4520 N. Monitor, Chicago, IL 60630

TRUE FICTION PUBLICATIONS: P.O. Box 1348, Denver, CO 80201

21ST CENTURY COMMUNICATIONS: 155 Sixth Avenue, New York, NY 10013

UNBRIDLED AMBITION: P.O. Box 500202, Houston, TX 77250-0202

VALKYRIE PRESS: P.O. Box 386, Bristol, ENGLAND BS99 7WL

VANGUARD GRAPHICS: P.O. Box 1606, Saskatoon, Sask., CANADA S7K 3R8

VICTORY PRODUCTIONS: P.O. Box 98, Norristown, PA 19404

VORTEX COMICS: 367 Queen Street West, Toronto, Ont., CANADA M5V 2A4

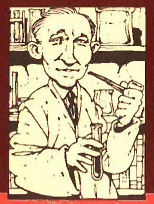
WILD THINK PRODUCTIONS: 12112 Brookhurst Street, Suite 9, Garden Grove, CA 92640

COPYRIGHTS: p. 193 © Adventure Publications; p. 12a © Alien Productions; p. 79b © Sergio Aragones; p. 17, 23a, 64a, 102b, 122c © Archie Comics; p. 50 © Dean Armstrong; p. 165a © Boris Artzybashef; p. 119b © Robert Asprin and Ken Mitchroney; p. 84 © Chuck Austen; p. 133 © Don Avenall, Norman Walker, Dave Gibbons; p. 211 © B-Movie Comics; art © Michael T. Gilbert; p. 120 © Peter Begge; p. 41b © D.N. Bailey & Nigel Tulley; p. 56, 117b © Donna Barr; p. 189a © Cary Bates & Keith Giffen; p. 118a © Howard Bender; p. 146a © S.A. Bennett, Scott Bieser; p. 22 art © Steve Bissette; p. 212 © Blackthorne Publications; p. 111 © B.C. Boyer; p. 173, 205c © Chester Brown; p. 70 © Bob Burden; p. 49b © Eddie Campell; p. 105a © Eddie Campell & Phil Elliott; p. 41a, 48b © Paul Chadwick; p. 86 © Howard Cheykin, Inc. & First Comics, Inc.; p. 221 © C.J. Cherryh; p. 112b © Chrysalis Visual Programming, Ltd., art © Pander Bros.; p. 16a, 113b, 119a, 152a, 162 © Continuity Associates & Neal Adams; p. 151b © Dave Darrigo, Ron Hobbs & Peter Hsu; p. 180b Dave Darrigo, Steve LeBlanc & Louis Paradis; p. 200 © Dave Darrigo & R.K. Taylor; p. 32 art © Dan Dey; p. 2, 16b, 24b, 39, 71a, 72, 82b, 88, 96, 101a, 124, 134, 154, 170, 193, 194b, 198b, 199, 201a, 205b, 214, 215a © DC Comics Inc.; p. 177 © Kim Deitch; p. 132b © Evan Dorkin; p. 197a © Evan Dorkin, Alex Leonine & Myke; p. 6, 7b, 8, 74 © Eclipse Comics; p. 162 © Will Eisner; p. 189c © Phil Elliott; p. 77a © Fantasco, art © artist; p. 130 © Scott Fmdley & Brooke Hagan; p. 132a © Ferret Productions; p. 20, 125a, 139b, 149b, 196, 217 © First Comics, Inc.; p. 102b & 103 © First Comics, Inc. & Global Communications Corp.; p. 81 © Richard Florence; p. 122b, 138, 153, 172 © 4Winds Productions & Eclipse Comics; p. 174 © Cindy Goff, Rafael Nieves, art © Seitu Hayden; p. 90 © Larry Gonick; p. 52 © Chester Gould; p. 142b GraphXpress; p. 179a © Martin Greim, Brian Bunink & Gary Kato; p. 91b © James Grummett; p. 136b © Thomas Vaughn Grummett; p. 97a © Mike Gustovich; © p. 71b, 92 © Hanna-Barbera Productions; p. 127b, 128a © James Hanrahan & Ben Dunn; p. 176 © Hanther; p. 29 Larry Harmon; p. 126b, 146a © Harmony Gold, U.S.A., Inc./Tatsunoko Production Company; p. 19a, 21b, 44, 117a, 126 © Harrier Comics; p. 24 © John Hartman & Stanley Shaw; p. 80 © Mike Harris and Henry Zeybel; p. 7a, 23b, 75a, 163b © Hasbro, Inc.; p. 197b © Simon Hawke & Phil Normand; p. 145 © Ron Hedden & Tom McWeeney; p. 127a © C.J. Henderson, Kevin Ferrell & M.M. Ritter; p. 165a © C.J. Henderson, Uriel Antonio & Scott Hanne; p. 104 © Jaime Hernandez; p. 97b © Matt Howarth; p. 5a, 60 © Peter Hsu; p. 21a, 92, 146c, 152, 157a, 161b, 181a, 185b, 222 © I.P.C.; p. 164b © Will Jacobs, Gerard Jones & Tim Hamilton; p. 49a, 69a © R.A. Jones & Butch Burcham; p. 83 © Joe Jusko; p. 4 © Mike Kazaleh; p. 143 © Jeff Kear; p. 144a © Gregg Kendrick & Frank Turner; p. 71c, 131 © King Features Syndicate; p. 62 © Richard Konkle & Mark Wallace; p. 135b © Peter Kuper; p. 218a © Harvey Kurtzman; p. 54, 129b © Steve Lafler; p. 69b Mark Lamport; p. 73b © Leonardo/Audie; p. 167a © Leonardo-TV; p. 66, 169b © Don Lomax; p. 156a © Lorimar-Telepictures Corp.; p. 164 © LucasFilms Ltd.; p. 35 © Dennis Mallonee & Chris Mannnan; p. 63 © Dennis Mallonee & Rick Hoberg; p. 213 © Milo Manara; p. 175a © Larry Marder; p. 51b © Mark Martinrosian; p. 42a © Don Martin; p. 13, 19b, 26a, 30b, 47, 53b, 65, 67, 87, 95, 123c, 125b, 135a, 136a, 139a, 140b, 160b, 163, 166, 167, 194a, 195, 196a, 201b, 202, 219b © Marvel Entertainment Group; p. 112a © Mattel, Inc.; p. 53a © Tom Mason, Bryon Carson & Alex Leonine; p. 121 © Henry Mayo and George Alec Effinger; p. 79, 183a © Ted McKeever; p. 62a © McNaught Syndicate, Inc.; p. 34 © Chuck Melville; p. 108 © Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, Inc.; p. 1 © Attilio Micheluzzi; p. 102c art © Frank Miller; p. 175b © Mirage Studios; p. 91a © Bernie Mireault; p. 159 © Ken Mitchroney; p. 219a © Moebius; p. 68 © Steve Moncuse; p. 36 © Michael Moorcock; p. 218b Alan Moore and Hunt Emerson; p. 116 © Alan Moore, John Totleben, Eclipse Comics; p. 140a © Stephen Murphy & Michael Zulli; p. 186a © Jeff Nicholson; p. 85a © John Nordland II; p. 46a, 148 © NOW Comics; p. 61 © Paul Ryan O'Connor, John Gallagher & Mike Christian; p. 102a © Paul Ryan D'Connor & Jim Chadwick; p. 40 © Peter D'Donnell and Jim Holdaway; p. 11b © Ocean Comics; p. 8b © Katsuhiro Otomo; p. 101b © Dennis Pimple & Norm Dwyer; p. 63a © Warren Pleece; p. 45, 46 © Joshua Quagmire; p. 205a © Peter Palmer, Kevin Farrell & James Baldwin; p. 75 © Steven Pearson; p. 152b © Martin Powell & Wayne R. Smith, art © Seppo Makinen; p. 149a © Steve Purcell; p. 114 © Sylvie Rancourt; p. 183c © Ron Randall; p. 158 © Richard Piers Rayner & Vincent Danks; p. 98a © Renegade Press; p. 88b, 190a © Mike Richardson & Jim Bradrick; p. 109a © Mike Richardson, Randy Stradley, Larry Stroman & Art Nichols; p. 30a © Trina Robbins; p. 160a © Darick Robertson; p. 85b © Jim Rohn; p. 215b © P. Craig Russell; p. 89 © Scott Saavedra; p. 43, 187b © Stan Sakai; p. 156b, 216b © Carlos Sampayo & Jose Munoz; p. 204 © Dave Schultz; p. 80a © Ron Sharp; p. 29 © Will Shetterly and Vince Stone; p. 206 © Silver Linings; p. 144b Donald Simpson; p. 28 © James Dean Smith; p. 27b © Bill Spangler & John Gallagher & Michael Leing; p. 57 © Jim Starlin; p. 146b, 147 © Dave Stevens; p. 123b © Craig Stormon; p. 113a © Randy Stradley, Harrison Fong & Art Nichols; p. 105b © Rumiko Takahashi; p. 5b © Bryan Talbot; p. 161a © Tatsunoko Productions, Ltd.; p. 179b © Telepictures Corp.; p. 42b © Roy & Dann Thomas, Craig Stormen, art © Glenn Wong; p. 109b, 110 © Topps Bubblegum; p. 64b, 123a © TriCorp Enterprises, Inc. in association with Eternity Comics; p. 194a © TRU Studios; p. 27a, 54a © Tim Truman; p. 12b © 20th Century Fox Entertainment; p. 150 © Dan Vado, art © Frank Cirocco; p. 188 © Valentino; p. 165b © Mike Valerio, Patrick Oliffe & Michael Laing; p. 98b © James Vance and Dan Burr; p. 14 © Mark Verheiden and Chris Warner; p. 86a © the VIP Corp.; p. 16b, 76, 100, 107, 203b © Viz Communications, Inc. and the artists; p. 51 © Neil & Siri Vokes; p. 25 © Chris Warner; p. 99 © John Wagner; p. 77b, 78 © Matt Wagner; p. 100 © Lamar Waldron & Ted Boonthanakit; p. 54b, 115, 186b&c, 190b © Walt Disney Productions; p. 61a © WaRP Graphics; p. 59 © Bill Willingham; p. 33 © Jim Woodring; p. 129a Kate Worley & Reed Waller; p. 216a © Berni Wrightson; p. 203a © V.M. Wyman; p. 73a © Phil Yeh; p. 15 © Randy Zimmerman; p. 142a © Mark Zingarelli.

The Best Work By The Best Cartoonists In The World...

GILBERT HERNANDEZ

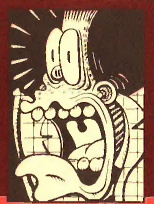
JAIME HERNANDEZ


RICK GEARY

FRIEDMAN BROTHERS

STAN SAKAI

E.C. SEGAR


PETER BAGGE

WM. MESSNER-LOEBS

STEVE DITKO

HAL FOSTER

MUNOZ & SAMPAYO

ROBERT CRUMB

From The Best Comics Publisher In The U.S.

At Fantagraphics Books, Comics Isn't A Commodity.

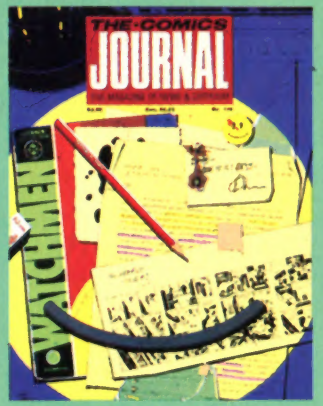
It's An Art.

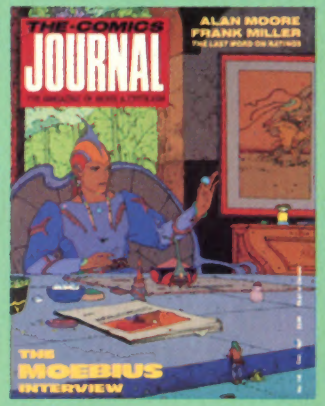
© 1987 DC Comics Inc.

© 1987 Dave Stevens

© 1987 Moebius

EXCELLENCE





If you think excellence in comics means more than just a nicely rendered issue of THE UNCANNY X-MEN, then THE COMICS JOURNAL might be precisely the magazine you've been waiting for.

The last decade has been the most exciting in the history of comics—a seemingly endless parade of new publishers, new creators, new formats, and new approaches.

It's in times like these that you need a magazine like **The Comics Journal** to help you make sense of the field.

For 11 years now, **The Comics Journal** has been the watchdog of the comic-book industry—an eclectic, literate, muckraking periodical that has striven to give some much-needed dignity to this field.

If you want an idea of the kind of material we think is publishing, just look at the contents of every issue:

News: Scrupulously-researched, far-ranging, and *tough* (no publicity handouts here), the *Journal's* acclaimed "Newswatch" section covers new projects and new publishers, crises and clashes, trends and events—both here and abroad.

Interviews: *No one* can match the *Journal's* extended, in-depth conversations with the men who make the comics—past and present. In just the three issues pictured above, we've featured Alan Moore, Frank Miller, Dave Gibbons, Russ Heath, Mort Walker, Jean "Moebius" Giraud, and Dave Stevens. They talk to the *Journal* because they know we'll ask the intelligent questions—and we'll grant them the space to give the intelligent replies.

Reviews: In a field brimming with professional fanboys, lowbrows, and shills, the *Journal's* critics stand alone in offering literate, insightful commentary (and they won't hesitate to make ground beef out of a few sacred cows, either). Articulate, witty, and omnivorous, the reviews column is a thought-provoking, often blisteringly opinionated stroll through the current scene.

Plus Special Features: Moore & Miller: Ratings and censorhsip . . . Garry Trudeau on why he fought to increase *Doonesbury's* size . . . Berke Breathed vs. Pat Oliphant Alan Moore on writing . . . Jerome Charyn in comics . . . State of the Art: France '87 . . . Sketchbook sections on Steve Rude and Charles Burns . . . and more!

The Comics Journal. It's been called irresponsible, venomous, too negative . . . arrogant, biased, elitist . . . and just about every other adjective in the book; it's been thrown off newsstands by enraged comic store owners; it's lived through (and won) three libel lawsuits; and it's buried half a dozen more timid competitors over the years.

If you think a magazine about comics has to be dull . . . if you think a magazine about comics has to be subliterate . . . if you think excellence and comic books can never coexist . . . then you've never read ***The Comics Journal***.

We think it might be time for you to give it a try.

Send me the following issues of *The Comics Journal*. I've enclosed $3.95 for each issue (foreign: $4.50)—or $9.95 for all three (foreign: $10.95):

☐ **#116**: Moore, Gibbons, Walker.

☐ **#117**: Stevens, Heath.

☐ **#118**: Moebius, Miller, Moore.

☐ Also, start my subscription to the *Journal* with #119. Here's $24.00 for nine issues (foreign: $30.00).

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY STATE ZIP

Send to: THE COMICS JOURNAL, 1800 Bridgegate Suite #101, Westlake Village, CA 91361